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THE

CHRISTIAN FAITH

ASSERTED AGAINST

Deists, *Arians*, and *Socinians*;

IN EIGHT

SERMONS

Preach'd at the

Lady MOYER's LECTURE

IN THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH of St. *PAUL*,

1728, 1729.

(*And since greatly* ENLARGED.)

To which is prefixed,

A large PREFACE concerning the *Light* and the *Law* of NATURE, and the *Expediency* and *Necessity* of REVELATION.

By *HENRY FELTON*, D.D.

Late Principal of *Edmund Hall*, Rector of *Whitwell* in *Derbyshire*, and Chaplain to his Grace the Duke of RUTLAND.

1731

OXFORD,

Printed at the *Theatre*, and are to be Sold by C. RIVINGTON, at the *Bible* and *Crown* in St. *Paul's Church-Yard*, LONDON. 1731

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Presented to the Theolog
Seminary by Mrs Sara
Potter of Bridgetown W.J.

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Juſt Publiſhed,

In Two VOLUMES, Octavo, *(Never printed before.)*

Thirty-Six SERMONS, *on the moſt important Points of the* CHRISTIAN RELIGION, *viz.*

The Burning of the World.
The Bleſſedneſs of them that die in the Lord.
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Time and Eternity.
The Joys and Glories of the heavenly State.
On *Chriſtmas-Day.*
The Martyrdom of King *Charles* I.
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By SAMUEL JOHNSON, *A. M.* Vicar of *Great-Torrington*, in *Devonſhire.*

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TO THE

Right Reverend FATHER in GOD

EDMUND

Lord BISHOP

OF

LONDON.

My LORD,

THE Sermons contained in this Volume having been preached by your Permiſſion, and two of them, which had the Honour of your Preſence, having had the greater Honour of your Approbation

a

bation alſo, are now come in moſt humble wiſe to preſent themſelves to your Lordſhip in anſwer to the Queſtion you were pleaſed to ask me, whether I deſigned them for the Preſs. Which Queſtion I would in great Modeſty interpret, as a ſort of a Command.

The three Firſt are printed with very few Additions, but upon reading ſeveral Pieces ſince written in the Cauſe of Infidelity and finding I had leiſure enough to write and keep pace with the Preſs I have greatly enlarged the Others, and taken into Conſideration ſeveral Points, which have been lately advanced, or rather brought over, and over again; for I can ſee Nothing, but the Old Cavils revived; and there appeareth Nothing New, or Extraordinary, but greater Malice, leſs Modeſty, and more Prophaneneſs.

Your

Your Lordſhip's Pious and Paternal Care for the Preſervation of your Flock appeareth in your conſtant Vigilance, and Labours, and more eſpecialy in thoſe truly *Paſtoral Letters*, which are written with an Authority becoming your high Station, and with that Plainneſs and Perſpicuity in that Spirit of Meekneſs, and Charity, which ever reconcileth Dignity and Love unto the Sacred Character, you bear, and raiſeth in all true Chriſtians great Reverence and Affection to your Perſon, while they find themſelves, as they read, ſo exceedingly comforted and confirmed in the Faith. For they contain ſo clear an Account of the Chriſtian Doctrine, and ſo full and juſt a State of the ſeveral Objections, with ſuch eaſy and ſafe Solutions, and ſuch ſatisfactory Anſwers to them, that the Nation may be fully inſtructed, and completely

armed againſt all the Arts and Attempts of Infidelity, for tho' the Letters are addreſſed to your own Dioceſe, the Benefit is more Univerſal, and extendeth to all.

This your Interpoſition will prove a Powerful Means thro' GOD's Bleſſing to ſtemm the Tide and ſtop the Progreſs of Infidelity, and tho' there is little Hope of convincing thoſe, who are gon over to the Camp of the Infidels, and become Diſciples of them, that ſit in the Scorner's Chair, yet your Excellent Endeavours are a ſtrong Preſervative againſt the growing Infection, and Potent enough to expel the Poiſon, even after it is deeply imbibed, except where, as in Natural Caſes, ſo likewiſe in Moral, it hath ſeized the Vitals; For then nothing but a Miracle in the One, and nothing but ſupereminent Grace infuſed can prevail againſt it in the Other.

We

We are called upon indeed to throw up all Defences, but thoſe of the Pen, and to expoſe our ſelves without any ſhelter to the Attacks of our Enemys; to ſtand the Aſſaults of Blaſphemy and Buffoonery, and open our Boſoms to receive thoſe Virulent envenomed Darts, that are thrown againſt us with a Rage and Fury, that ſeemeth rather Diabolical than Human.

But ſurely we are under no Obligation to ſuffer this Violence, theſe cruel Mockings and Scourges of the Tongue. Ridicule is no proper Teſt of Religion, and Blaſphemy and Prophaneneſs can make no Pretenſions to Reaſon and Argument. We have a Right to Defence againſt ſuch Invaders, as theſe; but when any Perſons will argue ſeriouſly, and treat things Sacred with Decency, and carry themſelves in theſe Debates, as becometh Scholars and Gentlemen,

we

we ſcorn to take any Advantage from the Laws, and are always ready to entertain ſuch Adverſarys, as Theſe, with great Candour, to weigh conſiderately whatever they are pleaſed to offer, and to return them an Anſwer with all good Temper, and Civility.

Truth can never ſuffer by a ſerious and learned Enquiry; but Truth and Religion, and all, that is Venerable and Sacred ſuffereth, I know not whether more by Outrageous Impiety, or by Ludicrous Drolery. The Diſſolution of Religion muſt neceſſarily be attended with a Diſſolution of Manners, and the Natural Religion ſo warmly contended for ſeemeth to be no other, than *That* of following Nature without any Reſtraint or Reſerve.

Theſe Patrons of Infidelity and Advocates for Reaſon againſt Revelation are highly exaſperated,

we

we find, by the Oppoſition your Lordſhip hath given them; and the Weight of your Arguments is demonſtrated by the Storms, it hath raiſed againſt you; but they are no more than Storms: they may overturn a Man, a Forreſt, or even a Kingdom by Violence; otherwiſe, like the Winds, to which they are compared, they are only very Noiſy, and very Empty.

Your Lordſhip by your great and Extenſive Learning, and eſpecialy by your exact and Eminent Knowledge in the Laws both Civil and Eccleſiaſtical is able to maintain the Rights, as well as the Faith of the Church; and we are the more aſſured of the Divine Protection, while in the King we have a Nurſing Father, and in the Queen a Nurſing Mother, and in the Royal Iſſue ſuch a Beautiful Proſpect of deriving theſe Bleſſings to our lateſt Poſterity.

That

DEDICATION.

That your Lordſhip may long live the Ornament and Defence of this Church in the higheſt Stations of it, and after all your Faithful Services on Earth meet a more Glorious and everlaſting Reward in Heaven is, may it pleaſe your Lordſhip, the Fervent Prayer of

Your LORDSHIP's moſt Dutiful

and moſt Obedient Servant

Edmund Hall.
On the Feaſt of
the Purification
1731-2.

H. Felton.

THE PREFACE.

WHEN I first undertook this Service, I intended to consider some peculiar Texts, and some singular Points, which the Reverend and Learned Dr Waterland *had recommended to me: I have that great Deference for his Judgment, that I am sensible, I could neither desire nor find a more Skilful Hand to point out the most proper Method of managing this Controversy, and I thought my self Happy to be directed in my Choice by so able a Judge.*

But upon my Return to Oxford *towards the Beginning of the* October *following, I thought it necessary to take a larger Compass, and so I altered my first Design and proceeded upon another Plan: the Reasons I have intimated in the first Discourse, and I need not enlarge upon them here.*

Only since I began this Course of Sermons, I may very justly say, that the Books published in

the Cauſe of Infidelity have abundantly juſtified my Choice, and as I proceeded upon the general Principles of thoſe Writers, it is ſome Satisfaction to find that theſe Sermons are in ſome meaſure an Anſwer to what they have ſince advanced, and an Antidote to the Poiſon, they have diſperſed.

What I delivered concerning the Light of Nature and Revelation according to the firſt Draught of theſe Diſcourſes was not ſo much argued as taken for granted, and therefore I propoſed to conſider thoſe two Points more diſtinctly in this Preface, eſpecialy ſince the Light of Nature is ſet up, as of it ſelf ſufficient without the Light of Revelation; but ſince by the ſlowneſs of the Preſs I have had time greatly to enlarge the whole, and to interweave theſe Points with the Body of the Work it will not be neceſſary to treat them ſo largely, as I intended, tho' there is ſtill Room to ſay a great deal upon them. eſpecialy as ſeveral other Points, which I have more lightly touched, will fall in with theſe: as the Origin and Obligation of the Law of Nature, and the Obligation of the revealed Law likewiſe: the One containing the Moral: the other preſcribing both the Moral, and Poſitive Dutys of Religion; and from hence it will appear whether the Light and Law of Nature are ſufficient to direct and entitle Men to Happineſs under the preſent Defects and Depravity of their Mind: or rather whether Men can now by the Light of Nature and their own Strength alone ſo conform to and fulfill the Law of Nature, as to entitle themſelves to Happineſs, and deliver themſelves from ſuch Penaltys, as they may be

be liable unto for their Transgressions of that Law.

Some of our Adversarys receive, others reject a Revelation; and it may be of good service to all true Believers to see, how far those, who acknowledge a Revelation agree with those, that deny it. Upon Considering the several ways taken by different Writers to oppose Divine Revelation in general, and the Doctrines revealed in particular I could not but observe an exact Conformity of Principles among them, and that the Deists, Arians *and* Socinians *came one and the same way to their several Conclusions, if their Conclusions may be called Distinct when they all equaly meet in the* Unitarian *Scheme: For the Conclusion they all hold is this, The Unity of the* God-*Head in Opposition to any Distinction of Persons in the same Divine Nature and Essence: The* Deists, *who reject all revealed Religion, cannot indeed have any Regard to the Divine Relations made known by the Scriptures, and therefore they can acknowledge* God *the Father no more, than* God *the Son: this Relation they cannot discover by Reason, and they refuse the Discovery of it by Revelation. The* Arians *and* Socinians *admit the Revelation, but deny the Doctrines therein revealed so far, as concerns the Divinity of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and all those Points, which are Consequential thereupon. So that tho' the* Arians *and* Socinians *do admit a Revelation, and the Scripture to contain that Revelation, and further, tho' they acknowledge the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be therein revealed, and the Son to be spoken of as a Divine Person, to whom is ascribed*

Adoration and Dominion, yet they do upon their ſeveral ſuppoſitions deny the Divinity of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, allowing One Perſon only, viz. *the Father to be truly and properly, that is Eſſentialy and Eternaly Divine. To this Purpoſe the Writers on the* Arian *ſide eſpecialy, have appropriated ſeveral excluſive Terms to the Father, ſuch as Supreme, Unoriginate,* &c. *from which, whether they will infer it or no, it will follow, that the Son is not properly* God, *or that He is Another beſides, and not One* God *with the Father.*

That the Terms are excluſive when applied to God *with reſpect to the Creature, we do readily allow, but that they are excluſive, when applied to the Father with reſpect to the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt we do as conſtantly deny, together with the Metaphyſical Nature of the Son, as if it were Different from the real Eſſence of the Father. All theſe I have ſpoken to already, they are a ſort of Language thrown out to amuſe and amaze the Reader, and He, that knows not the Trick of laying a great Streſs upon Words, that have no meaning, and of repeating with much Earneſtneſs and Solemnity ſome ſpecious Terms, which ſeem to be ſomething, but are realy nothing to the Purpoſe, is not acquainted with one prime Secret in theſe Writers of Controverſy.*

In the Proſecution of this Argument I thought it neceſſary to examine the Foundation of all Human Knowledge, to trace it up to its ſprings, and to derive it thro' all its ſtreams in the whole Courſe of the Mind from the firſt Perception and ſimple Apprehenſion of things to its utmoſt Perfection, till from Earthly Objects it roſe to Heavenly, and Reaſon

Reaſon was inſtructed and carried beyond this World by Revelation.

It hath been the Artifice of thoſe, who are Enemys to Revelation, to repreſent it as an Enemy to Reaſon, and the Unskilful are impoſed upon, while it is inſinuated, that what is above Reaſon is therefore againſt it: This Perſuaſion may be Simplicity in ſome, but the Pretence is Contrivance and Deſign in others, which they lay down as a Maxim, and uſe as an Engine to carry on the Scheme of Infidelity: If the great Patrons of Reaſon are indeed perſuaded, that what is above Reaſon is a Contradiction to it, and that Reaſon can aſſent to no Truth, but what it comprehends, I muſt take the Freedom to ſay, their Reaſon is not ſo well exerciſed as it ſhould be, and if what they aſſert be true, it is confined in a much narrower Compaſs, than they imagine: At this rate they may argue againſt their own only Standards of Knowledge, ſenſible Evidence and Demonſtration, and diſpute for ever about Cauſes and Effects, the Propertys and Appearances of Things, till they can find the Reaſon of every Property, and ſee into the Eſſences themſelves. In Experimental Philoſophy we are aſſured of the Facts, tho' in many Inſtances we can only gueſs at the Cauſes, and the manner of their Operation. Nature hath her Secrets, and if you pleaſe, her Myſterys. The Diviſibility of Quantity: The Quadrature of the Circle: the Propertys of the Loadſtone, its Electral Powers and conſtant Attachment to the North, are Articles to exerciſe the Faith of theſe Philoſophers, when they ſhall find that Demonſtration lieth on both ſides of the Queſtion, that

what can be Demonſtrated cannot be Effected, and that Propertys are manifeſt, which yet our Reaſon is not able to account for. The Incomparable Sir Iſaac Newton's *Works will ſhew, how high ſo great a Genius can ſoar beyond the Reach of Vulgar Underſtandings, and at the ſame time how difficult it is to demonſtrate the Cauſes of thoſe Wonderful Effects, which we ſee in the vaſt Expanſe about us. The Principles of Gravitation, and Attraction, that Univerſal Magnetiſm of Nature, tho' rightly aſſigned, cannot yet themſelves be accounted for but from the Virtue, and Impreſſion of the firſt great Mover, and when this wonderful Man hath given us ſuch noble Demonſtrations of the Motions, and Diſtances of the Heavenly Bodys, we muſt at laſt be content to reſolve all thoſe Stupendous Appearances into His infinite Wiſdom, and Almighty Power, who hath made all things in Number, Weight, and Meaſure.*

Moral Philoſophy hath its Difficultys alſo, and theſe Boaſted Reaſoners may diſpute whether they be Reaſonable Creatures and Free Agents, till they can ſettle wherein the Freedom of Will and Liberty of Action conſiſt, and whether they act freely by their own Determination, or are impelled, and ſecretly conducted by a Fatal Neceſſity: Theſe Queſtions I ſhall leave for their Thoughts to feed and ruminate upon, becauſe doubtleſs their Reaſon alone is ſufficient to reſolve all Points relating to the Moral Conſtitution of Man!

It is the great Commendation of Reaſon to ſearch into and Contemplate all Natural and Moral Cauſes throughout the whole Compaſs of the Creation,

tion, thereby more clearly to display, and the more widely to celebrate the Incomprehensible Greatness, and Infinite Goodness of the Creator, and no Hypothesis is blameable tho' mistaken, but such a One, as leaveth GOD *out of the System, and would account for the Natural and Moral World without Him.*

Thus the Reason of Man is properly employed, but if Truths Natural and Moral have their Difficultys, and we cannot always account for the Cause and Manner of Natural Operations, why should we imagine, that Supernatural Truths should lie more open to our Comprehension? and refuse to believe what we are not able to comprehend in revealed Religion, when we must believe what we are not able to comprehend in Natural, nor to account for even in the most Common and Familiar Effects of Nature? The Essence of GOD is equaly Incomprehensible in Natural Religion and Revealed, and the Essences of Things are equaly impervious from a Straw to a Star.

To pass by the former and the future Effects of an Almighty Power in the Resuscitation of the Body and its Re-union to the Soul, we are not able to account for our present Life and Existence: We are fearfully and wonderfully made, and if we refuse the Apostle's information we cannot tell, how we live and move and have our Being. We know not the Term of Union between our Spirits, and Souls, and Bodys: nor after so many useful, and great Discoverys made by Anatomy with relation to the Structure and Conformation of the whole Body, can we account for those Involuntary Motions of the Blood and Spirits, and the several

ral Functions of Animal Life, if we must have perfect Satisfaction in these things, we may doubt at least whether we exist or no; such Sceptics, like Pyrrho, *would question, if possible, whether they were dead, even after they were buried, and contrary to the Epigram, the Grave it self would hardly cure such Infidels, as these.*

From this transient View we may discern the Unreasonableness of disputing Facts, or not yielding our Assent where there are either Natural, or Supernatural Difficultys to poze us in Transactions relating to this World. But surely the Argument is much stronger for our Assent to the Supernatural Truths of Revelation, as they are removed beyond the Views of our Natural Light, and are not subject to the Evidence of our Senses, nor Examinable by any Observations or Experiments.

When Propositions, however they may be true are of no Influence, or Obligation upon us, but only Matter of Recreation and Diversion to the Mind, we are at Liberty to receive them or lay them aside without giving our selves the Trouble of Examining the Truth of them: Yet let me add this by the way, that if we don't care to examine, we have no right to pronounce upon them, and no Man should pertinaciously deny even these without proving them to be either False or Impossible; But where Propositions are affirmed by an Authority sufficient to lay us under an Obligation of Believing, and the Nature of them is such, as hath a great Influence upon our Practice, and our Happiness, there, when we understand the Terms, we must give our Assent, altho' they contain Points Mysterious and Sublime, which we are not able

to

to Comprehend: and therefore there is no withholding our Assent from the great Truths of the Gospel, unless we can shew, that any such Proposition implieth a Contradiction, or that the received Sense is False, or that Another must necessarily be the True One.

Thus in the Doctrine of the Trinity, when the Adversarys charge an Impossibility or Contradiction, or take upon themselves to maintain either the Arian, *or* Socinian *Scheme, they go upon wrong suppositions, and argue either Figuratively, or Literaly from Created to Uncreated, and from things Human to Divine; and determine in so peremptory a manner, as if they fully Comprehended an Incomprehensible Subject. But of this I have treated at large, and I hope sufficiently in the following Discourses.*

On the other Hand in Things, which we can perfectly conceive, and where an Impossibility and Contradiction are evident in a strict and Literal sense, there we understand them, as they are intended, in a Tropical or Figurative Manner. Thus when our Blessed Lord calleth Himself a Door and a Vine, and his Disciples the Branches, the Expressions are meerly Figurative and Metaphorical as I have considered them already; and no Body, that I know of pretendeth to understand them in a Literal sense: and in all like Cases it is equaly absurd to understand Literaly, what is Figuratively spoken

So when of the Sacramental Bread He said, This is my Body, *and of the Cup,* This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood, which is shed for you, Luke XXII. 19, 20. *or as St* Matthew

and

and St Mark *expreſs it*, This is my Blood of the New Teſtament which is ſhed for many for the Remiſſion of Sins. Mat. xxvi. 28. Mark xiv. 24. *He did not mean, that the Bread then was, or afterwards ſhould be tranſubſtantiated into his Body and Blood, or that the Cup ſhould be tranſubſtantiated into the New Teſtament of his Blood, or into his Blood it ſelf, but only that theſe were Symbols and Memorials of his Death: Of his Body, which was broken, and of his Blood which was ſhed for us, by the Participation of Both which we are made Partakers of all the Benefits of his Paſſion according to St* Paul's *Account of this Inſtitution who delivered it to the* Corinthians *as he had received it from the Lord.* 1 Cor. XI. 23, 24, 25. *For as the ſame Apoſtle demandeth,* 1 Cor. X. 16. The Cup of Bleſſing, which we bleſs, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Chriſt? The Bread which we break is it not the Communion of the Body of Chriſt, *and by doing this in remembrance of Him*, As often as we eat this Bread and drink this Cup we do ſhew the Lord's Death till He come. 1 Cor. XI. 26. *Theſe Expreſſions then are thus to be underſtood in a Figurative, Symbolical, and Commemorative ſenſe, ſo that the Bread and the Cup are a real Communion of his Body and Blood. The outward Part or viſible Sign of this Sacrament is, as our Church Catechiſm teacheth, Bread and Wine: The inward Part, or Thing ſignified is the Body and Blood of* Chriſt, *which is verily and indeed taken and received in all their real and Spiritual Effects by the Faithful. This is the real Preſence, which we hold. He is ſo preſent as to annex the very Benefits of his*

his Body and Blood to our Communion of the Bread and Wine, which are now made the Spiritual Food and Nouriſhment of our Souls, that as He loved us and gave Himſelf for us, we might ever be Partakers of, and give Thanks unto Him for his Unſpeakable Gift! But theſe Expreſſions, This is my Body &c. *cannot be underſtood of his very Body and Blood according to the Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation.*

This Doctrine we ſay implies an Impoſſibility, and a Contradiction, and lies within the Verge, and Examination of our Senſes: For beſides the inſuperable Difficultys attending the ſuppoſed Change, which I will preſume to call palpable Contradictions, and abſolute Impoſſibilitys, I beg leave to offer two or three Conſiderations, which tho' they may not add to the weight of theſe Objections, perhaps may be of ſervice to open the Eyes of thoſe, who are blind to Impoſſibilitys and Contradictions, or are perſuaded at leaſt, that they are to believe them.

One is, that according to their own Doctrine there muſt either be a double Tranſubſtantiation of the Blood, or the Wine is not Tranſubſtantiated in the Cup, or the Bread is not Tranſubſtantiated into the Blood as well as the Body of Chriſt: *This laſt they hold, and bring it as a Reaſon for Communion in one Kind. For this Purpoſe they have invented a double Commemoration under the Names of a Sacrament and a Sacrifice: One of* Chriſt's *glorified Body, in which they ſay, is the Blood, and this is the Sacrament wherein ſtandeth their Tranſubſtantiation: The other of the ſuffering Body, where the Blood is ſhed, and ſeparated,*

and

and this is the Sacrifice of the Mass, and here is no Blood in the Body; But surely it is the Body, which was broken, and the Blood which was shed, that according to his Institution, and Revelation to St Paul *are the proper Subject of this Commemoration: Of the glorified Body I shall speak again as I proceed.*

Another Consideration is, that if they will have these Words of the Institution to be literaly understood, they must first settle the true Construction of the Pronoun, This *is my Body. If it relates to the Bread it must, according to several of their own Writers, be taken Figuratively. This Bread is my Body, or the sign of my Body. If the Pronoun referreth literaly to the Body, then it is an Absurd Tautology, and affirms nothing at all but that this Body is my Body. The Pronoun must refer either to the Bread, or the Body: if to the Bread, then something is distinctly affirmed of it, This Bread is my Body, and the Prædicate cannot destroy the Subject, that it shall be no longer Bread, and when it cannot be literaly understood, it must be Figuratively taken, and explained by the Sign, or Communion of the Body of* Christ, *As, if St* Paul *had said, The Bread which we break, is it not the Body of* Christ? *We must necessarily understand it, as He hath realy expressed it, Is it not the Communion of the Body of* Christ? *They ought next to shew, why the Words are not to be literaly understood in the second Instance as well as the First, and affirm, that the Cup is as realy the Blood, or the New Testament in the Blood, as the Bread is the real and very Body of* Christ. *Yet here they admit the Figurative sense, tho' they have*

have no other Ground for the Distinct Conversion of the Wine into the Blood of Christ. *I would only observe, that the Transubstantiation of Wine into Blood, as our Lord changed Water into Wine, and as Water hath been miraculously turned into Blood, is easier to our Apprehension, supposing the Change were but as Evident to our Senses, and yet for the sake of the Entire Transubstantiation of the Bread into the Body and Blood, and tho' the Council of* Trent *hath distinctly decreed that Conversion of the Wine, yet in this Dispute they generaly mean the Change of the Bread into the Body and Blood of* Christ.

A Third Consideration is, whether the Words are to be understood of the Body of Christ *in its suffering, or in its glorified State, in its mortal or immortal Condition: If in its suffering State it no longer subsists in such a State, and Bread cannot be changed into what is not: if in its glorified and immortal State, let them answer how such a Body can suffer and die, or be offered up a Sacrifice any more? Whether to solve these Questions or not, yet to defend Communion in one Kind by their Doctrine of Concomitancy they assert first that the Bread is transubstantiated into* Christ's *glorified Body, and of that only the Laity Communicate: "Is there no Blood," saith one of their lateſt and best reputed Writers, "in a Living "Body, and is not* Christ *alive and glorified? And "do not Catholics believe that very Body, which is "glorious in Heaven is realy received in the Sacra- "ment?" with more to the same Purpose which I shall presently take Notice of. Afterwards to justify Communion in One Kind he distinguisheth between*

between the Body and Blood of Christ *as it is a Sacrament, and as it is a Sacrifice. As it is a Sacrament it is the glorified Body of* Christ *together with his Blood as we have seen before*, but (*to give his own Words*) as it is a Sacrifice representing that of the Cross, and the separation of his Sacred Blood from his Body, that being the proper Office of Priests, they only must offer the Unbloody Sacrifice, and consume, as well as consecrate both Kinds to signify the separation of *Christ*'s Blood from his Body on the Cross, when they act as Priests, and say Mass, but if they communicate without saying Mass, they may and do communicate under One Kind. *These are remarkable Passages transcribed from a Book entituled*, The Case Review'd; or an Answer to the Case Stated, By the Author of the Gentleman instructed MDCCXV. *Post-script pag.* 10, 11, 12.

I had reason to take Notice of this double Transubstantiation, and Distinction between Christ's *Glorified and Suffering Body, there seeming to be two different Exhibitions of* Christ's *Body: of his Glorious Body in the Sacrament, of his Suffering Body in the Sacrifice of the Mass, so that the Sacrament and the Sacrifice are two different Things, and if they hold Transubstantiation in the Sacrifice, it is quite another thing from Transubstantiation in the Sacrament. But their Doctrine seemeth to want some further Explanation, when they think fit to give it, and to what I have said I shall only add, that this Writer very truly calls the Holy Communion a "Sacrifice representing that of "the Cross, signifying, the separation of* Christ's "*Blood*

"*Blood from his Body,*" pag. 12. *But then how are the Bread and Wine Tranſubſtantiated into his Glorified Body? and into his Suffering Body they cannot be: For when this Writer hath told us, that Concomitancy ſtandeth upon this Principle, that where* Chriſt's *Living and Glorious Body is, there is his Living and Glorious Blood, he very truly addeth, that they have not been ſeparated, ſince he expired upon the Croſs, nor never will to all Eternity.* Poſt. pag. 10.

This is an obſcure and confuſed ſort of an Affair, but it is their Buſineſs to clear it, Many Obſervations will riſe from hence againſt the Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, but I ſhall proceed no further in the Argument at preſent. I would not mention it at all without being ſomething particular upon it for the ſake of Ordinary Readers; In entring upon this Argument in order to juſtify and maintain the Catholick Doctrine I have diſtinguiſhed between the Literal and Figurative ſenſe in ſome clear and manifeſt Inſtances, and when our Adverſarys ſhall be able to prove that Chriſt *can be a Son of the ſame Nature with the Father no more, than He is a Door, or a Vine, and that the Trinity carrieth as evident Impoſſibility and Contradiction in it as Tranſubſtantiation, we muſt give up the Catholic Doctrine, and reject the Scriptures, which contain it; But till they can comprehend the Nature and Exiſtence of GOD as fully, as they can the Propertys of Bread we ſhall refuſe the Parallel, and ſtill believe that what is above our Reaſon implieth not any Contradiction, and that what is Incomprehenſible is not Impoſſible.*

Before

Before I proceed, I would entreat those of the Church of Rome *to consider the great Mischief, they do to the* Christian *Faith, by matching their Transubstantiation with the Trinity, and putting them on such a Foot, as if they must stand and fall together: If the One be false, must the other therefore not be True? Because we must contradict our Reason and Senses in the One, cannot we without the same Imputation believe the Other? How they can defend the Trinity, while they do not only hold the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, but make the Trinity a Parallel Doctrine to it for my part I cannot see: To overthrow the First their Adversarys need only disprove the Last, and then the* Romanists *will quickly find, They have no Way to defend the Faith, but by giving up Transubstantiation, and by shewing the Difference between Things subject to sensible Proof and Examination, and Things confessedly above the Reach of our Understanding. We own the Doctrine of Transubstantiation in some sense to be Incomprehensible, but we do not therefore reject it, because it might nevertheless be True, but we reject it because we plainly see, and are manifestly convinced that it is False: and till they can bring down the Persons of the Trinity to a Parity with Men, and make them, as open and palpable to our Examination as a piece of Bread and a Wafer, we shall always put a Difference, and draw different Conclusions between things that are subject to none of our Senses, and things that are subject to them all.*

Since my Writing these Discourses, the sufficiency of Reason alone without Revelation hath been

been loudly asserted, and Pleas and Defences have been entered for it, as if there was a Conspiracy formed against it to cry down the Use, and to deny the Power and Exercise of it in Matters of Religion.

I have in the Course of these Sermons considered the Force and Compass of our Natural Powers, and arguing from the State of Religion over all the World, where it was not guided by some Revelation I have shewed, that Reason was greatly defective, and I do still insist upon it as Fact, that under the Conduct of meer Reason alone Mankind degenerated more and more, that Reason alone, even where it shone in its clearest Light, as among the Philosophers, was not sufficient either to instruct or reform the World.

But because I could not discuss this Point so fully, as might be desired, I proposed in the Preface to consider more distinctly the Light and the Law of Nature, together with the Expediency and Necessity of Revelation.

The Religion of Nature hath of late Years been considered in several Views, and particularly it hath been Delineated by a most accurate and masterly Hand, as it is founded in the Eternal Difference of Good and Evil, which he expresseth by Right and Wrong, or what in his Language amounteth to the same thing by Truth and Falshood. The Obligation he rightly fixeth in the Will of GOD, and deriveth Natural Religion from the great Author of Nature: He resolveth Happiness and Misery into the same Principles also from which he deduceth Natural Religion, and as he maketh them to consist in Pleasure and Pain,

he maketh these to result from Right and Wrong, or the different regard to Truth and Falshood in our Actions. So that Natural Religion, and Happiness, which is the End proposed, are founded in the Truth of Things and acting agreably thereunto according to the several Relations, Man standeth in, and the Dutys arising from those Relations both to GOD and Man. To which I may add his Proofs of a Divine Being, and of the Immortality of the Soul, and of Future Rewards and Punishments.

This as I understand him, is a short Account of his Scheme, and it is a Deduction becoming so Wise a Man. Here is no Unintelligible Jargon of the Reason and Fitness of Things, nor any rude and Blasphemous Assertions of any Thing Prior to and Independent of GOD Himself, and of GOD's being under an Obligation to Duty; but from him those bold and vain Disputers may learn, That Things are Fit or Unfit as they are Conducive to, or Destructive of some End. That Moral Fitness and Unfitness result from what is Right and Wrong, True and False, and that these arise from the Eternal Distinction of Good and Evil fixed by the GOD of Truth, to whom all Falshood and Wrong are an Eternal Contradiction: The Bare Fitness and Relation of Things do not make the Law, nor induce the Obligation, but GOD is the great Lawgiver, who hath made the Fitness and Unfitness of Things applied to the Nature of Man, and the several Relations and Circumstances, He is placed in, the great Rule, or rather the Subject of his Commands and Prohibitions. This I have ventured to add as the Sense and Collection

lection of this great Philosopher, and it is a full Confutation of those shallow Thinkers who are justly charged with supposing a Law without a Lawgiver, and a Religion without a GOD. I shall have more to say upon this Subject before I make an End. However, as the Reasonings of this Excellent Person are for the most part very Abstracted, and Abstruse, and several of his Notions very curious and singular, he hath not, we find, pleased all those, who have treated Morality in the like Abstracted manner. The Exceptions to his Delineation I shall pass over, only I must needs say, I think it hard to insinuate, that this Treatise is at all injurious to revealed Religion: He seemeth indeed to have carried his Enquirys further, than meer Reason without the Scriptures could go; But then he stoppeth just as he is passing the Bounds, & owneth the want of a Guide to lead him on: What he hath delivered is so far from undermining true revealed Religion, as Himself declareth, that he hath rather paved the Way for its Reception, and accordingly in his subsequent Thoughts upon the State and Condition of Man he maketh a Beautiful Transition from the Confines of Reason into those of Revelation. It is a mutual Illustration, and Enforcement of those Truths to find What is so consonant to Reason taught and confirmed by Revelation, and possibly, had it pleased GOD to have lengthened his Days, he might have given us a Delineation of Revealed, as he hath of Natural Religion.

I must upon all Occasions profess my self so great a Friend to all Attempts, which tend to fix the Truth of Morality upon some sure and firm

Foundations, that, altho' they proceed not the same Way, yet if they come to the same End, I look upon them as so many concurrent Proofs in the Cause of Virtue. But this I must take leave to say, That the different Schemes erected upon different Principles, and Each appearing in the Mathematical Guise, are a manifest Proof, that how specious soever the Process may seem, and how capable soever Morality may be of Demonstration in general, It is not capable of it in this Form precisely, For no Body ever yet disputed against Mathematical Demonstration. An Imitation of the Mathematical Form may be used at large, and Abstracted Reasonings are very properly employed in an Irrefragable Chain to bind down the loose Pretenders to Reason, and to silence, if not convince Gainsayers; but this Method is not so proper for Popular Instruction. Morality is a plain thing in itself, and should be taught in a plainer Manner: What is so very Intelligible should be delivered in an Easy Didactical Form; and thus only would I be understood as to any thing, I have said in the way of Censure upon dressing Morality in a Mathematical Garb: What I have dropped of that Kind was pointed against those especialy, who are setting up Natural Religion in Opposition to Revealed, till the whole of their Intentions is summed up in this Conclusion, that Natural Religion is, and ever was sufficient for all the Purposes of Man even in this depravity of his Nature, and GOD Himself can impose no other.

It is not my Purpose to pursue the several Maintainers of this Scheme thro' all their Extravagant

travagant and Blaſphemous Aſſertions, but I ſhall conſider the Subſtance of what hath been advanced among them, and endeavour to confute them rather by a true State of the Caſe, than by taking their Arguments to Pieces.

And this I ſhall attempt Firſt,

I. *With regard to the* Light *and the* Law *of* Nature. *Secondly,*

II. *With regard to the* Expediency *and* Neceſſity *of* Revelation.

I. *I have in the Courſe of theſe Sermons ſpoken diſtinctly of the* Light *of* Nature *both in the Common, and the Scripture Account of it; of the* Law *of* Nature *I have not treated ſo expreſly, but have rather mentioned it incidentaly, as not ſufficiently taught in this great Eclipſe of our Natural Light: It may be proper therefore to propoſe my Thoughts more diſtinctly upon this Subject, and becauſe there is ſo inſeparable a Connection between the* Light *and the* Law *of* Nature, *that we cannot ſpeak clearly of the One without the Other, I ſhall without repeating more, than will unavoidably recur, deliver myſelf in a ſupplementary manner after the following Method.*

1. *I will explain what is meant by the* Light *of* Nature *in all its ſeveral Degrees.*

2. *What is meant by the* Law *of* Nature.

3. *And then thirdly we may enquire, How far the* Law *is Diſcoverable and Practicable by the* Light *of* Nature.

1. *For the* Light *of* Nature.

By this is to be understood not any Innate or Actual Knowledge, but a Faculty of Learning and discerning the Truth and Falshood of Things as they fall under our own Observation, or as they are offered and proposed to us by others. That our Knowledge is not Innate is from hence manifest that our Ideas are not so; and were our Ideas Innate, it would not follow that our Knowledge is so too; For our Ideas are upon Every supposition previous to our Knowledge, and Knowledge consisteth in a proper Distinction, Comparison, and Arrangement of them. The Light *of* Nature *therefore is not any inborn actual Knowledge, but a* Capacity *of attaining to such Kinds and Degrees of Knowledge, as we apply unto, or are instructed in. The Understanding openeth by Degrees, and is furnished with various kinds of Knowledge according to the various Instruction, it receiveth: We see the daily Progress and Improvement of the Mind, and if, like our Growth, it be less perceptible to ourselves, it is visible enough to others. The Mind itself is Originaly like Virgin Tablets without any Impressions or Traces of the Style, like a fair Sheet of Paper without any Stroke or Letter, and is inscribed and filled up by Degrees with all the various Characters and Conceptions, which the World about us, the Instruction of others, and its own Reflections can furnish: The Objects of Sense are the Materials, out of which are gathered the first Rudiments, and the several Stores of Knowledge, and in the Mind, as in a well-ordered Magazine, they are laid up and assorted by themselves according to the several Senses, by which they were brought*

brought in. A Man therefore, that wanteth one of his Senſes, wanteth alſo ſuch a Proportion of Knowledge, unleſs he can ſupply the Defect by ſome ſecondary, and ſubſtituted Means, and underſtand thoſe things, which are proper to that alone, by the Analogy and Aſſiſtance of another. It is endleſs to argue in ſo plain a Caſe, and this is ſufficient to ſhew that there is Originaly no Actual or Natural, but only in Proceſs of Time an acquired and gradual Knowledge in the Mind.

But tho' there be no Original Knowledge, there are ſome Original Notices, and Apprehenſions in the Mind of great Uſe for the Conſervation both of the Natural and Moral Frame of Man. Theſe, as they are Natural Movements and Directions, may very properly be conſidered, as the firſt Operations and Appearance of the Light of Nature: One Branch of which directing us to the Preſervation of Life is common to us with the reſt of the Animal Creation: The Other, which riſes from a ſenſe of our own Actions, is peculiar to Man, as He is a Moral Agent.

Theſe, the Natural and Moral Inſtincts will deſerve a more particular Enquiry. The Natural is in a great Meaſure antecedent to, and independent of that Intellectual Knowledge, which is acquired by the Rational Facultys of the Mind: The Moral Inſtinct is joyned with and dependeth upon the Knowledge of Moral Truth, and therefore I ſhall treat of them in the following Order.

1. *Firſt, of the Natural Inſtinct as diſtinct from and Antecedent to our Intellectual Knowledge.*

2. *Of*

2. *Of our Intellectual Knowledge Natural and Moral.*

3. *Of the Moral Instinct subsequent to and rising from our Moral Knowledge.*

1. *And first for the Natural Instinct as distinct from and Antecedent to our Intellectual Knowledge.*

For since Man is a Compound Creature of Spirit and Soul and Body, and the Body and Animal Spirits are the Organs and Instruments of the Mind in all its Operations, during this united State, we may justly conclude, that whatever Knowledge riseth from this Compound State, which would not have risen meerly from the Mind alone, may be properly said to rise Originaly from the Animal Frame, and therefore those Instincts, which we feel, tho' they be common to the meer Animal Creation, yet inasmuch as they are Natural Notices, may be called one Ray or Portion of the Light of Nature.

In Brutes this Light is not Discursive, as it is in Man, but it serveth to direct them in the Preservation of themselves and their Species, *as surely, and effectualy as the Eyes in their Head serve to distinguish Objects and to direct their Motions. Man indeed is able to reason upon these Instincts as upon any other Subject of Science, but he generaly obeyeth them without Thought or Consideration. No Man deliberateth whether he shall eat or drink when he is pressed by Hunger and Thirst, neither doth any Man reason with Himself, whether he shall fly from a falling House or a Devouring Beast: The first* Nisus *the first Movement is to avoid the Danger: the second is*

to

to call in our Reaſon to reſiſt it: The firſt is a ſuddain Motion from a Natural Impreſſion, and therefore our Inſtincts, tho' Common to the Animal Creation are Original Notices: Theſe are truly Innate, and diſcover to us the firſt Dawning and Glimmering of the Light of Nature.

2. *But there is a Light, which may be called the pure Intellectual Light of Nature to which the Body contributeth nothing but the Materials to work upon, and is no more than an Organ or Inſtrument without which the Mind in its preſent State could not perform its Operations. By this Light I underſtand the Powers, and Facultys of the Mind to diſcover, and when diſcovered to apprehend the Truth and Connection of any Propoſition, whether Natural or Moral. In Natural Truth this Light directeth us to all the Principles and Concluſions in Arithmetic and Geometry, and the ſeveral Parts of Natural Philoſophy. Thoſe great Men, who by their own diſquiſitions diſcovered and ſo formed any Mathematical Propoſition, diſcovered it by that Natural Light which ſheweth the Proportion and Agreement of one thing to another in a Chain of Conſequences, from ſome Original Propoſitions, Axioms, and Conceſſions, and therefore thoſe Principles from which ſuch Truths and Concluſions are deduced are called Firſt Principles, to the Truth of which the Mind neceſſarily aſſenteth, as ſoon as we underſtand the Terms, in which they are expreſſed.*

But beſides this Light, which directeth us in the Inveſtigation of Natural Truth, there is another Branch of it, if I may ſo divide it, by which we diſcern all Moral Truth, and the Eternal Differences

of

of Good and Evil. This is the Light, which we are here to enquire after, that Light which leadeth us into the Knowledge of Natural Religion.

Taking the Light of Nature in this View, by it we understand in general the same Intellectual Faculty, by which we discern Mathematical or any other Truth, applied to the Discernment of Good and Evil.

It hath of late Years especialy been the Turn of several great Writers to investigate Moral Truths in a Mathematical Way. Whether Morality is capable of that strict Form of Demonstration or no, I will venture to assert that it is not less certain and demonstrable in a way suitable and proper to it; because the Demonstration is to be fitted to the Subject, and not the Subject to any particular kind of Demonstration.

In all Geometrical Conclusions, however the Operation is Internal, the Object is always External, Sensible, and Material: In Moral Conclusions the Object and Operations are both Internal, the Practice only is External; and if we were to apply the Scale and the Compass, perhaps we could not measure the Affections of Moral Actions so exactly as we can the Figure and Proportion of Lines, and yet we are not less certain of the Rectitude and Obliquity of Moral Actions, than we are of the Rectitude and Obliquity of a Line. I do not mean whether such an Action as done by such a Person be certainly Good or Bad, for that will depend upon Circumstances, but I intend that the Actions themselves without regard to this or that Person are Good or Bad, and so pronounced upon the first Hearing. In this Sense they are rather

ther Propoſitions than Actions, or elſe Actions conſidered only as Materialy Good in themſelves, and ſo they become at once both Inſtances and Rules of our Duty.

Natural and Moral Truths in ſome Reſpects are equaly Evident, but the Truths of Morality are generaly ſpeaking more Obvious and Evident at their firſt Propoſing than Natural or Artificial Truths. In Natural Truths hardly any thing is immediately Evident beyond firſt Principles: In Moral Truth the great Lines of our Duty are like firſt Principles plain and legible at firſt ſight, and preſently aſſented to as ſoon, as propoſed. All the Difficulty and Obſcurity ariſe from applying them to particular Caſes and Perſons, or more properly from the Practice of them, ſince the Practice thro' Man's Infirmity is not anſwerable to his Knowledge.

We are under no Neceſſity therefore of arriving at Moral Truths by ſuch Methods and Diſquiſitions, as we uſe in Phyſical and Artificial Subjects; but the Mind hath a nearer Paſſage to them, and diſcerneth them ſooner, than ſhe doth Thoſe, which employ our Reaſoning Facultys in a long Chain and Deduction; it is much Eaſier to teach Men their Duty, than to make them Mathematicians, and they will learn it ſooner from the Scriptures, than from the moſt refined and Abſtracted Treatiſes and Eſſays upon it.

Whether the Truths themſelves are more diſcernible, as ſome Objects are more Viſible than others, or whether the Mind hath a ſharper, and quicker ſight, when they come within her Ken, may perhaps be thought too refined a Speculation.

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The Point may be argued upon both ſuppoſitions; For Moral Truths, tho' they are not any more, than other firſt Principles, Innate, have in them ſomething ſo connatural to the Mind of Man becauſe of their Fitneſs to his Condition, that they affect our Reaſon with an Immediate Sympathy, and however Eternal, Abſtracted and Independent on us in themſelves they be, yet being, as they are required of us, and made Matter of our Duty, founded in our Nature, they immediately touch the Conſcience, and by a Kind of Symphony ſtrike, like Uniſons, upon the very Strings and Frame of our Conſtitution.

From hence by an eaſy Tranſition we may paſs

3. *To the Moral Inſtinct ſubſequent to and riſing from our Moral Knowledge.*

For over and above the Knowledge, we acquire by the Light of Nature every Man beareth both an Internal and External Teſtimony to the great Truths or Dutys of Morality ſo far, as He is inſtructed in them. He muſt firſt have knowledge of them, or he can be no more affected by them, than an Infant, or an Ideot: and he muſt have a right Knowledge of them, otherwiſe he cannot be rightly affected by them; But upon a true and perfect Knowledge of them, whether obtained by his own Diſquiſitions, or the Inſtruction of others, Nature herſelf both Internaly and Externaly beareth Witneſs to them.

By the Internal Evidence I underſtand both the Conſciouſneſs and Conſcience, we have of Moral Truth: the firſt of theſe denoteth that Natural ſenſe, we have of the Honeſty and Turpitude of Moral Actions: the ſecond is that Conviction, we feel within our ſelves upon Tranſgreſſion, and

that

that Applauſe of our own Hearts, when we obey the Precepts of Morality. Or more briefly we may ſay, that Conſciouſneſs is the Conviction of Moral Truth, and Conſcience of Moral Actions.

The External Evidence is that Shame, which overſpreadeth Men's Faces upon the mention of any thing Offenſive, and that Confuſion, which overwhelmeth them, when deprehended in a Criminal Act. The One is the Guard of Virtue, the Other the Confeſſion of Guilt, and both of them expreſs the Natural ſenſe, we have of foul and diſhoneſt Actions. They ſhew, that there is a Natural Turpitude in Evil, and that our Minds are formed to diſcern what is Good and Evil in the great Lines of Morality as juſtly, as our Senſes are formed to perceive their proper Objects. For Truth to the Mind is as Natural, as Colours to the Eye.

I conclude therefore with reſpect to Moral Truth, that the Light of Nature conſiſteth in that Intellectual Capacity, we are endewed with, of our ſelves to diſcern, and from others to learn our Duty: And the great Differences of Good and Evil our ſelves bear Witneſs to both outwardly and Inwardly: Inwardly by a Conſciouſneſs and Conviction of Truth, and by a Conſcience of Duty and Tranſgreſſion: Outwardly by thoſe Involuntary Emotions of Shame, and Exultation, which diſcover the quickeſt ſenſe of Turpitude and Honour. Theſe Natural Springs in the Moral anſwer to the Inſtincts in the Natural Conſtitution. and Theſe are as uſeful to preſerve the Moral, as thoſe are to preſerve the Natural Life. They are Our Guard and Monitors and Witneſſes in our Duty, and if they are not the Subſtantial Light

of

of Nature it self, we may properly call them a Ray and Effulgence of the Mind both as they shine Inwardly, and break forth Outwardly in a Conviction, we cannot stifle, a Conscience, we cannot controll, and a Shame, we cannot hide.

To these I may add every other Manifestation of Reason in the Actions and Countenance of Men: The Faculty of Speech in a Rational manner, not like Daws, or Parrots (which, when they have said what they have been taught either with or without Connection, have said all they can) is a certain Indication of Reason: The Smile also as well as the Blush of the Face displayeth it, and, like One looking out of the Window, telleth, who lodgeth within.

If any thing more be meant by the Light *of* Nature, *than what every Man is possessed of by Himself, then by the* Light *of* Nature *must be understood not only the* Reason *of* Every *Man, but the* Reason *of* all *Men, and* all *the* Productions *of* Reason *from the Beginning to the End of the World; And so It is not only the* particular Reason *of every Man, but the* Collective Reason *of all Men however recorded, and preserved in any Monuments of Arts and Learning. Taking the* Light *of* Nature *in this View, It containeth all the Discoverys made, and to be made, and, all true Arguments used, and to be used as long, as Man continueth on the Earth. For the Attainment of this* Light *therefore we must have Recourse to Instruction, and every Man besides his Natural Capacity will have such a Proportion and Degree of this Light of Nature, as Instruction and Application can furnish him with.*

But

But here we muſt diſtinguiſh between the Inſtruction, *as well as the* Light *of* Reaſon *and* Revelation. *For altho' it is by* Reaſon *that we underſtand* what *is taught by* Revelation, *yet thoſe* Points *not being* Originaly *diſcoverable by* Reaſon, *are to be diſtinguiſhed from* thoſe, *that are, and the* Light, *that diſcovereth them, is to be diſtinguiſhed from that* Light, *to which they are diſcovered.*

In this Queſtion therefore All, that is contained in the Scriptures, muſt be excepted, and Morality, *as delivered in the Scriptures, muſt be diſtinguiſhed from* Morality, *as delivered in all other Writers, who are neither mediately nor immediately, nearly nor remotely acquainted with the Scriptures: For whatſoever is fairly to be preſumed owing to the Scriptures is to be diſtinguiſhed from the Productions of meer Reaſon alone, and then if we only diſtinguiſh thus far, we ſhall find a great Difference between the* two Lights *of* Reaſon *and* Revelation, *and if we diſtinguiſh further between thoſe parts of the World, who had a Communication with* Revealed Light, *and thoſe, who had loſt it, we ſhall ſtill ſee a far wider Difference between the* Light *of* Reaſon *and* Revelation: *Perhaps there are no People ſo Blind and Barbarous, to whom ſome* Glimmerings *of a* Traditional Revelation *at leaſt have not deſcended: and the* Light *of* Reaſon *ſeemeth in all Nations to have prevailed in* Proportion *to the* Light *they borrowed from* Revelation. *In this Age and Nation it is Abſurd to talk of One in Oppoſition to the Other, when* Reaſon *is ſo manifeſtly indebted to* Revelation. *For the* Light *of* Reaſon *in one*

ſenſe

ſenſe taketh in the Light *of* Revelation, *and ſo it is mightily improved: But of it ſelf it is a dark and bewildered Guide, if that may be called a Guide, which itſelf ſtandeth in ſo much need of Direction.*

After this View of the Light *I proceed in the next place*

2. *To the* Law *of* Nature.

By the Law *of* Nature *is underſtood the Rule and Order preſcribed to every Being ſuitable to its ſeveral Kind. So to the Sun and Stars their* Law *is to ſhine and to diſpence their Influences according to their ſeveral Degrees of Light, Magnitude, and Diſtance with reſpect to the Bodys ſituated round them: The* Law *of Planets is to perform their ſtated Courſes according to the largeneſs of the Sphere in which they move or of the Circle, they deſcribe, and according to the different Degrees of Celerity, with which they are carried either about their own* Axis, *or round any Common Center.*

To Stones and Minerals, and Plants and Trees, their ſeveral Propertys are their Law, *according to which they grow and operate in producing anſwerable Effects, and by which they are ſpecificaly diſtinguiſhed from one another.*

To the Animal World, beſides What Living Creatures have in Common with Stones and Minerals, as Accretion, and with Plants and Trees, as Vegetation, and Circulation of the Juices, the Law *of* Nature *is the Preſervation of themſelves in the ſeveral ways proper to each Kind, and in the ſeveral Elements to which they belong.*

But

But when we speak of the Law *of* Nature *we take it in a more restrained and peculiar Sense, as* Man *is the* Subject *of it: and here, not meerly and simply as he is a Rational Creature, but as he is a Compound Rational Creature consisting of Spirit, and Soul, and Body, and acted by the Impressions of Sense, as well as by the Dictates of Reason.*

This is clear, because else if with respect to the Law *of* Nature *Man was to be regarded meerly as a Rational Creature, the* Law *of* Nature *would be the* same *to Mankind as to other Intelligent Beings in proportion to the Degrees and Excellency of their Understanding. Now the* Law *of* Nature, *or the* Law, *to which all Intelligent Beings are subject, is such, as supposeth them Free, and requireth them to act according to the Powers, they are endewed with, and to the peculiar Commands of their* Creator, *as they stand in Relation to GOD, and each other. This* Law *is solely* Intellectual, *as applied to Beings* meerly Spiritual, *requiring Purity, Love, and Obedience with respect to GOD, and the most Extensive Benevolence to all other Beings, that are proper Objects of it.*

With respect to Man considered as a Compound Person made of Body and Soul as well as Spirit, and acted by Sense as well as Reason, created and born for good Purposes suitable to his Nature, and placed under several Relations to GOD and his Fellow Creatures, the Law *of* Nature *to* Him *must not only have regard to his peculiar Essence, as distinguished from all other Earthly Creatures by his Reason, but must respect him likewise as*

He is ſubject to the ſame Affections, and Appetites of Senſe with the Brute Creation, and ſo thus made and conſtituted It conſidereth Him under all his ſeveral Relations alſo.

The Law *of* Nature *then with reſpect to* Man *is a Collection of certain Eternal and Unvariable Truths, whereby he is required to improve his Underſtanding, to regulate his Appetite, and to diſcharge the ſeveral Dutys riſing from the ſeveral Relations, he ſtandeth in to GOD and the World.*

As to the Origin *and* Obligation *of the* Law *of* Nature, *we found them in the* Eſſence *and* Will *of GOD: Our Adverſarys derive them from the* Reaſon *and* Fitneſs *of Things conſidered as previous to, and independent of his Will, and in their Language they lay GOD under an Equal Obligation with his Creatures.*

It may be neceſſary therefore to conſider the ſeveral parts of this Scheme, with reference to the Account, they give of Morality, and with regard to the Obligation, to which they equaly ſubject the Creator, and the Creature.

That there is a Fitneſs and Unfitneſs founded in the different Reaſon, and Relation of Things is manifeſt from conſtant Uſe and Obſervation, as this Fitneſs and Unfitneſs are applied to us, and underſtood of the various Means uſed in proſecuting the End propoſed: ſo Things, or rather Actions are called Fit, as they are conducive to ſome End, and agreable to the Condition and Relation, we are placed in, in the World, and in this reſpect what is Fit for us to do, is ever Fit for every Man under the ſame Circumſtances to have

have done, and to do. Hence ariſeth the general Fitneſs or Unfitneſs of Things in the ſame Condition and Relation, and thus this Fitneſs and Unfitneſs, as they are taken abſtractedly in a Moral ſenſe, and anſwer to True and Falſe, to Good and Evil, are ſaid to be Eternal; the Reaſon of them being ever, and unvariably the ſame.

Whether they be previous to and Independent of the Will of GOD is another Queſtion, for they may be Eternal and Immutable, as they refer to the Eternal Differences of Good and Evil, tho' they be not previous to and independent of his Will. For tho' all Truth in one ſenſe is Antecedent to the Creation of Things, and to any Declaration of GOD, yet it is neither previous to Him, nor independent of Him. For there are Numberleſs Truths in the Divine Mind, but the Diſcovery and Manifeſtation of them depend upon his Pleaſure, as the Truths relating to Man and the World about us had not appeared, had not Man been created ſuch as He is. Theſe Truths ſubſiſt ſomewhere: either in the Divine Mind, or in Created Subjects. As they exiſt in Created Subjects they are only Coæval with thoſe Subjects, as they exiſt in the Divine Mind they are Eternal. Truth abſtractedly conſidered belongeth to Intellectual Beings only: In GOD it exiſteth Eſſentialy: in Man Objectively, as it is the Subject both of his Contemplation and his Duty: and thus it muſt exiſt, or it hath no Exiſtence at all, and therefore no Eternal Exiſtence but in an Eternal Mind. Otherwiſe ſay, ye profound Philoſophers, that make the Reaſon and Fitneſs of Things antecedent to GOD Himſelf, whence they were de-

rived into the Divine Mind, and from what Fountain did they ſpring, or where did they exiſt ſeparate from the Divine Being? That they are previous to his Will is no otherwiſe to be conceived than we can conceive Himſelf to be previous to his Will, and that they are independent of his Will is no otherwiſe to be conceived than we can conceive his Eſſence and Attributes to be independent of his Will. Theſe Truths exiſt Eternaly by the ſame Neceſſity, by which the Divine Being Himſelf exiſteth, but at certain Periods they are manifeſted in proper Subjects created to underſtand, to receive, and obey them.

And ſo both Natural and Moral Truths, as they relate to us, depend upon the Will of GOD, inaſmuch as the Creation of proper Subjects dependeth upon his Will. To ſuppoſe any thing previous to the Firſt Cauſe, and independent of the Creator is a Contradiction in Terms, and all Arguments à Priori *therefore, that affirm ſomething Diſtinct from, and Antecedent to GOD, eſpecialy that affirm any thing to be Diſtinct, Antecedent and Independent, labour under the ſame Contradiction, and ſuppoſe ſomething* Eternal Beſides, *and* Before *what is* Eternal.

If any thing may be ſaid to be Independent of the Will of GOD becauſe He cannot alter it, nor make it to be other, than it is, this under due Explanation is readily admitted, but it is nothing to the Purpoſe: A Lion changed into an Aſs is no longer a Lion, and Water changed into Wine, is no longer Water: and ſo far GOD can alter the Nature of Things, but then the Things will not be the ſame, they were before. We do not take upon

upon us ſaucily and preſumptuouſly to determine what GOD cannot do; We know that He can do every thing, but what implieth an Imperfection, and nothing is impoſſible with Him, but Falſhood and Contradiction: and therefore in this Argument we ſay, that the Eſſences of things, and the Truth of Numbers and Proportions are as unalterable as the Truths of Morality. Matter cannot ceaſe to be Matter, while its Propertys remain, and tho' it may be modified into Numberleſs Forms it will be Matter ſtill, unleſs it ſhall be annihilated by the ſame Power, that created it. And ſo Moral Truths likewiſe vary with the Subject according to different Relations and Circumſtances, but they are ever the ſame in themſelves, and while Man continueth to be Man they are Ever the ſame to him under the ſame Circumſtances and Relations.

To object that if Moral Truth be not independent of the Will of GOD, it is of a precarious Nature, and dependeth upon his Arbitrary *Determination, whether it ſhall be Truth, or not; this is a Falſe and a Blaſphemous Conſequence, arguing from Human Will to the Divine, as if the Divine Will were mutable as ours, and to be* Arbitrary *implied at leaſt a Power, and Poſſibility of Evil as well as Good, in the Counſels and Actions of the Almighty.*

Thus indeed they argue, but ſurely they miſtake the very Eſſence of GOD, as if Falſhood and Wrong could ever enter into it, or as if his Arbitrary *Will could ever decree any thing contrary to his* Eſſential *Perfections. Whereas He is* Arbitrary *meerly from his own immutable Perfections, ſo that He can decree Nothing but what is conſo-*

nant to his Eternal Goodneſs and Truth, and every Contradiction to his Will is therefore Falſe and Evil.

The Term Arbitrary *as applied to the Will and Actions of Men is generaly of Evil Tendency, and therefore of Evil Signification; but applied to* GOD, *who is the Freeſt, as He is the moſt Perfect of all Beings, or more properly the only Perfect Being, the Term* Arbitrary *can never be underſtood in an Evil Tyrannical, or Capricious Senſe, and therefore for the Almighty to be* Arbitrary *is no Impeachment of his Goodneſs, Juſtice and Truth; and we may ſay of the Moral Creation, as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of the Chriſtian Scheme in the Salvation of Man:* That God worketh all things after the Counſel of his own Will. Epheſ. I. 11.

Among Men indeed, and according to Hobbe's *Philoſophy, where Power is all the Power, a Man can uſurp, and is exerciſed according to the Will alone of the Supreme Authority, without regard to the Eternal Differences of Right and Wrong, of Good and Evil, there the Sovereign Power may poſſibly in Fact decree* what *ſhall be* Vice *and* what *ſhall be* Virtue. *This is the Prerogative of Infallibility and Tyranny among Men; but not the Prerogative of GOD, who is alone Infallible. He diſclaimeth it as an Infirmity and Imperfection, which cannot approach Him; and therefore GOD being infinitely Perfect, it is both Blaſphemous and Abſurd to ſuppoſe that* Truth *muſt be* Precarious, *becauſe He is* Arbitrary.

The Difference between GOD, and his Creatures is this: GOD is Arbitrary *in all his Counſels,*

ſels, and all his Works, both as to the Deſignment and Accompliſhment of them in ſuch Abſolute Truth and Perfection, that what *He Willeth is always* Juſt, *and* what *He doth is always* Right. *And therefore with the* Pſalmiſt *we ought moſt ſtedfaſtly to believe what even the Light of Nature as well as the Pſalm revealeth unto us concerning our Almighty Creator, That* the Works of his Hands are Verity and Judgment, and all his Commandments are True. Pſal. CXI. 7. *This we underſtand, when we ſay, that GOD is* Arbitrary *in all his Counſels and Actions, and at full Liberty to purſue his own Determinations without any Impediment from Without, or Reſtraint from Within.*

But when we ſay that Man is Arbitrary, *we do not only include the Freedom, but more eſpecialy the Obliquity and Perverſeneſs of his Will. In GOD to act* Arbitrarily *implieth the higheſt* Liberty, *for He acteth ſolely from the Motives of infinite Goodneſs and Wiſdom: In Man to act* Arbitrarily *implieth an Imperfection, a Capacity to act in Violation of, or in Conformity to his Duty: and for Man to act* Arbitrarily *is generaly underſtood to act* unreaſonably *out of the Pride and Inſolence, the Vanity and Wantonneſs of the Heart: Man, ſuch is his Weakneſs, may vainly attempt to make Virtue Vice, and Vice Virtue: This Power ſome of the greateſt Patrons of Natural Religion, and Enemys of Revelation have aſcribed unto Man, but they cannot without equal Weakneſs, and Wickedneſs aſcribe it unto GOD. To deny, that GOD is* Arbitrary *ſo, as to be Maſter of his own Determinations is no other*

other than to say, There is no God, *or if they acknowledge any, it is to involve both Him and Us in the dismal Doctrine of Inexorable Fate, and Inevitable Necessity: and to say, that if GOD be* Arbitrary *He may change the Nature of Good and Evil is Blasphemously to charge the Weakness and Folly of Men upon the Indefectible Perfections of GOD.*

Our Adversarys in this Argument mistake both the Nature and Notion of Moral Liberty: *Is it, do they think, any true* Liberty, *that Man can transgress his Duty, or make a Foolish Choice? Is it any Degree of* Liberty *that he is under the Bondage of his Lusts and Passions? and would he not be equaly, or, properly speaking, would he not then only be truly* Free, *when without Obstruction he could uniformly perform his Duty, and without Distraction still chuse the most desireable Objects? This indeed would be* perfect Freedom: Goodness *and* Liberty *always accompany each other, and* Sin *and* Slavery *always go together; And GOD is Absolutely* Free, *because He is Infinitely* Good.

As to the other part of the Question concerning the Obligation *of the* Law *of* Nature, *whether it be founded in, and riseth from the* Fitness *and* Unfitness, *the* Reason *and* Relation *of* Things, *or from the* Law *of GOD, it is readily answered, that in several respects it ariseth from* Both. *From the* Fitness, &c. *of things considered as Means conducive to some Certain End: from the* Law *of GOD requiring us to pursue the End, and consequently to use the Means. The* Fitness *of Things considered only, as having a Natural Tendency to*

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the End, induce no Moral Obligation, *unleſs we are previouſly obliged to purſue the End. The Artificer, who would contrive a Machine to ſhow the Motions of this Planetary Syſtem, is obliged in one ſenſe to uſe proper Inſtruments, and work after a juſt Model, and to balance the Parts in due Proportions to each other; but he is not obliged to make ſuch a Machine, and therefore the* Obligation *to uſe the Means is an Improper Obligation: But the* Obligation *riſing from the* Law *of GOD requireth us to purſue the End of our Creation, the Happineſs and Perfection of our Nature, or to ſpeak in the more Modern Language, the* Law *of GOD requireth us to act according to the* Truth *and* Fitneſs, *the* Reaſon *and* Relation *of Things, becauſe they are conducive to the Happineſs and Perfection of our Nature.*

In the common uſe of the Word Law, *we ſometimes underſtand the* Rule *of Action, and ſometimes the* Will *of a* Superior, *but the* Rule *of Action obligeth only, as it is given and enjoyned by a Superior. The* Rule *doth not oblige of it ſelf, but from whence the* Rule, *from thence alſo the* Obligation *is derived. In all* Laws *the* Obligation *is derived from the* Authority *of the* Legiſlator: *in none from the* Body, *or* Precepts *of the* Law: *The* Obligation, *and* What *we are obliged* to *are clear different Things, tho' they are called by the ſame Name, and go under the Common Appellation of the* Law. *Thus by the* Law *of the Land we underſtand the* Preceptive *part, and by* Obligation *we underſtand the* Injunctive: *By the* One Matter *of* Duty: *By the* Other *the* Authority Enacting: *and ſince the*

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Matter *of the* Law *cannot oblige of it ſelf, there muſt be a* proper *Subject of* Obligation, *and a Competent* Authority *to* oblige. *Otherwiſe it is ſuppoſing* Obligation *without a* Law, *and a* Law *without a* Lawgiver, *or, as they ſpeak* previous *to any* Law *whatſoever; but I ſhall have occaſion to conſider this Point further, as we go along; in the mean time it may be neceſſary to conſider more diſtinctly this* Fitneſs, &c. *of things, which are ſaid thus to oblige, and what they are, on whom the* Obligation *falleth* previous *to, that is,* without *any* Law *at all.*

As to the Fitneſs, &c. *of Things, perhaps the Terms have not been duely weighed, and theſe Diſputers do not well underſtand what they mean, when they talk in this* crude, *yet* peremptory *manner of the* Fitneſs, &c. *of Things. Is Fitneſs an* Abſolute *or a* Relative *Term? and doth* it *not equaly regard both the* Agent *and the* End? *There is indeed* Abſolute *Goodneſs, and* Abſolute *Truth, as GOD is* abſolutely *Good and True; but there is no more any* abſolute Fitneſs, *than there is an* abſolute Relation; *when we inſiſt upon the* Fitneſs *of Things, the obvious Queſtion is for* What, *and for* Whom *are they* Fit? *And further it may be asked,* What *are the* Things *themſelves: are they the* Actions, *or the* Agents, *or* Both? *and why are* ſuch Actions *as are* Honeſt, *and* Juſt *and* True, Fit *for* ſuch Agents *as* Men? *Is it* meerly *becauſe they are* Good, *or is it not* moreover, *becauſe they are* ſuited *to the* Nature *and* Happineſs *of the* Agents? *This maketh them* Fit, *and becauſe they are thus* Fit, *GOD, who impoſeth this* Univerſal Law *upon all his*

his Creatures that they act ſuitably to their ſeveral Natures, willeth, that Men alſo act ſuitably to Theirs. *From this* Fitneſs *of Things then Men may diſcover the* Will *of GOD, and from his* Will *their* Obligation. *The* Truth *and* Fitneſs *of Things deſcend Originaly from GOD, He that made us, hath made us alſo* Fit *to receive them, by a Correſpondent* Fitneſs *in our Nature to them, and by adapting them ſo juſtly to the End, we are to purſue, and therefore from his* Will *ariſeth our* Obligation *to act according to them.*

If we look upon Man as the Subject, *on whom this* Obligation *falleth, we muſt conſider what* Man *is, and what the* Nature *and* Conſequence *of an* Obligation *are to ſuch a Creature, as* Man. *Ask then what* Man *is? He is a* Moral Agent: *ask what an* Obligation *is? It is the* Force *and* Virtue *of a* Law *derived from the* Right *and* Authority *of the* Lawgiver: *To ſay* Obligation *is a* Tie, *is a Tranſlation inſtead of a Definition, and an Empty Tautology nothing to the Purpoſe: ask what is the* Conſequence *of an* Obligation? *It is our being* accountable *for our Actions, and* liable *to the* Penaltys *of* Tranſgreſſion. *Obligation in this Queſtion is a* Juridical *or* Forinſic *Term, and a Man muſt be* accountable *for his Actions, or he can be under no* Obligation. Obligation *otherwiſe is a looſe diſcretionary Thing; and whatever is the* Phyſical *Conſequence of his Actions, there can be no* Moral *nor* Judicial *Conſequence from the* Obligation. *More Words are needleſs in ſo plain a Caſe: To ſay a Man is under an* Obligation, *and not* accountable *is a* Contradiction, *and if he*

he be accountable, *then look, to* whom *he is* accountable, *from* Him *floweth the* Obligation; *and ſo the* Creature, *the* Law, *and the* Obligation *are derived from the ſame Fountain, the great* Lord *and* Creator *of all Things.*

The Reaſon *and* Fitneſs *of Things then are ſome* ſpecial Truths *adapted to our Nature, and therefore made the* Rule *of our* Actions: *This* Rule *being given us by GOD becometh a* Law, *of which Men are ſo conſcious and convicted, that not having the* outward, *and* written *Law they are ſaid* to be a Law unto themſelves, *their Conſciences all the while accuſing or excuſing them. Whether therefore we conſider the* Fitneſs, &c. *of things as a* Rule, *or a* Law, *they are moſt ſtrictly* Obligatory *upon us, when by an hard* Catachreſis, *to give it the ſofteſt Term, they are ſaid to be* Obligatory *upon GOD Himſelf. This is the laſt part of the* Scheme, *and it will ask no very long Proceſs to diſcuſs it.*

To make the Reaſon *and* Fitneſs *of things previous to and Independent of the* Will *of GOD, and then to ſay, that GOD is* obliged *to act according to the* Reaſon *and* Fitneſs *of Things: that, as He is a* Moral Agent *what regulates his Actions is Law: that there may be* Obligation without Law, *as* Law *ſignifies the* Will *or Command of a* Superior, *and yet that* Duty *is not to be ſuppoſed without a* Superior, *and ſignifies* Obligation *to conform* Actions *to ſome* Rule *or* Law, *and that therefore GOD is* obliged *to conform his Actions to a* Rule, *This, as it is juſtly charged upon that ſort of Writers, is to ſpeak of GOD, as if they were ſpeaking of Creatures. For it is moreover lay-*

laying Him under the same Obligation, and equally subjecting the great Creator to the same Laws *with his Creatures. This we say is strange, and Uncouth Language, but let us consider the Justness and Propriety of it.*

Obligation *applied to* Moral Agents, *infereth, as I have said, their being* accountable *to some* Superior *for the Performance or Transgression of their Duty, and if* Obligation *doth, as they say it doth, presuppose* Will *and* Choice, *and* Power *to act* otherwise, *then to suppose GOD under* Obligation, *is to suppose in Him a* Will, *and* Choice, *and* Power *to act contrary to that* Obligation, *which is a supposition equaly* Blasphemous, *and* Absurd.

The Law *and* Rule *then according to which, they say, GOD is obliged to act, are the* Reason *and* Fitness *of Things. This by their account is a sort of a* Rule *or* Law, *that is previous to the* Will *of GOD, and to any* Laws, Commands, *or* Injunctions, *Divine or Human.*

From hence, as they explain themselves, there ariseth Obligation *without* Law, *as* Law *is used to signify the* Will *or* Command *of a* Superior: *For in that sense, saith a learned Gentleman with great Sagacity, there may be* Obligation without Law: *in another sense, where* Law *is used for a* Rule *of Action (that is a Rule without the* Will *or* Command *of a* Superior) *there, saith he, with equal Profoundness,* Obligation *always supposeth* Law, *that is, a* Law *without the* Will *of a* Superior; *which is no other at last, than* Obligation without Law, *and consequently if* Religion *hath any Dependance on this strange* Law, *here*

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is Religion *without a* Deity, *and a* Law *above GOD Himself.*

With respect to GOD it may be convenient enough for these Men to suppose Obligation *without a* Law, *and a* Law *without the* Will *of a* Superior; *For it will be difficult to find any* Law *to oblige Him, or any* Will, *that is* Superior *to Him: and in what manner they nevertheless attempt to subject the* Creator *to the same Laws with his* Creatures *is a Curiosity which may invite our Attention.*

Their Way of doing it is This. They first place GOD in the Rank of Intelligent Beings, *and* Moral Agents, *and then they tell us,* Intelligent Beings *and* Moral Agents *are subject to* Law. "*Moral Virtue, they teach, consists in the Con-*"*formity of our Actions to the Reasons of Things* "*in whatever relates to other Intelligent Beings,* "*or our selves, and therefore,*" *pray mind the Consequence,* "*must be Obligatory to all Intelli-*"*gent Beings* even previous to any Laws, or "Commands, or Injunctions Divine or Hu-"man.

But first, because Moral Virtue *consists in such a* Conformity *of our Actions to the* Reasons *of things, doth it* therefore *follow, that it must be* Obligatory *to* All *Intelligent Beings, even* previous *to any* Law, Divine *or* Human! *How this Universal* Obligation *followeth from this* Definition *of Virtue antecedently to any Law, the Author may show at his leisure. I ask secondly, whether GOD be included in this* Obligation *upon all* Intelligent Beings? *If GOD be included, then* Moral Virtue *is* Obligatory *upon GOD, the*

Term

Term *is applied to* Him, *and GOD is equaly Subjected with all other* Intelligent Beings *to the Dutys and Practice of it. I would ask thirdly, What that* Law, *and* Rule *is, which is neither* Human *nor* Divine? *Whether* Moral Virtue *be a* Rule *or a* Law? *and whether it be a* Rule *or a* Law *neither* Human, *nor* Divine?

That GOD is included equaly with his Creatures, and equaly subject with them to some Rule, *or* Law, *is by these Writers rudely asserted, when they are repeating over and over* God is obliged *to* This, *and* obliged *to* That: *And what they say I shall give as a Reply to these Questions in a few Words taken from One of the great Reasoners among them.* "*Now GOD,*" *saith this great Reasoner,* "*is a* Moral Agent: *therefore* "*what regulates his Practice is* Law. *If* Duty "*then signifies* Obligation *to conform* Actions *to* "*some* Rule, *or* Law, *then,*" *saith he, in Consequence of that Author's Principles, whom he writeth against,* "*GOD is obliged to conform his* "*Actions to a Rule.*" *But if that Author doth not include GOD, but the Creatures only, when He speaketh of* that Law, *which regulates the Practice of* Moral Agents, *then altho' GOD be an* Intelligent Being, *and a* Moral Agent, *He is not of the same Nature, Rank and Level with his Creatures, and falleth not consequently under a* Law *like them: For when it is said that all* Moral Agents *are subject to a* Law, *it is manifest, as in a Parallel Case, that* He is excepted, *who made them subject to a Law.*

The Inconsistency and Inconclusiveness of this Scheme are plain enough from this small Draught,

in

in which the ſeveral Paſſages aſſerting this Obligation *upon GOD Himſelf are collected and brought together; and therefore notwithſtanding the Diſtinction between a* Law *and a* Rule *which would be very* juſt, *were it* truly ſtated, *and* rightly applied, *I do inſiſt upon it, that* Obligation *previous to all* Law *is* Obligation without Law, *and that* Obligation without Law *ſuppoſeth* Duty *without a* Superior, *and conſequently* Religion *without a GOD, and yet, if, as they roundly affirm,* Law *regulates the Practice of GOD Himſelf, as He is a* Moral Agent, *they may once more conſider, Where is the* Obligation previous *to all* Law.

But ſurely it may be ſaid in the higheſt and moſt excellent ſenſe, that GOD is a Law unto Himſelf: *that there is no* Law Extrinſic, Previous, *or* ſuperior *to* Him, *and that the* Law *of his* Actions *is no other than the* Freedom *and* Perfections *of his* Nature. *There is a Difference between the* Rule, *which GOD obſerveth Himſelf, and the* Law, *which He preſcribeth to all other* Agents, *and in this* Difference *with regard to* Obligation *lieth the true* Diſtinction *between a* Rule *and a* Law. *The general* Rule, *which GOD obſerveth is the manifeſtation of his* Infinite Perfections, *and his* Goodneſs, Juſtice *and* Truth *are diſcloſed in the Exerciſe of his* Wiſdom *and* Power: *The ſpecial* Rule, *which GOD acteth by, both in the* Natural *and* Moral *World conſiſteth in chuſing and applying* Means *proportioned to the* End: *The* Means *proportioned to produce all things into Being is the* Alone Efficiency *of his* Almighty WORD: *The* Means *uſed, that the*

the Things ſo produced ſhould anſwer the End, *which GOD propoſed in Creating them, are the ſeveral* Habitudes, Motions, *and* Propertys *which He gave and aſſigned unto them, as they are* conſtituted *in themſelves, and* proportioned *and* referred *to each other in* Number, Weight *and* Meaſure: *tho' I muſt obſerve that* Number, Weight *and* Meaſure *might have been* leſs *or* greater *in proportionable Degrees, as it is in* Infinite Power *to create* More *or* Fewer, Greater *or* Leſſer *Worlds at his Pleaſure. The* Rule *therefore which GOD obſerveth is* improperly *called a* Law *with reference to Himſelf: It is a* Rule *of his own making, as the* Model *is entirely of his own* Deſigning. *But the ſame* Rule *is a* Law *to the whole Creation: It is the* Law *of their* Motions, Influences *and* Operations, *and altho' they muſt conſtantly obſerve this* Law, *foraſmuch as they cannot alter nor interrupt the Courſe of it, yet GOD the great* Lord *of the* Univerſe *can* interpoſe *at his Pleaſure, and* alter, divert, *and* ſuſpend *thoſe* Laws *of* Nature, *which He hath given. At his great Bidding the* Moon ſhall ſtand ſtill, *and the* Sun ſhall not haſte to go down: *The* Waters alſo ſhall ſtand on a Heap, *and the* Fire *ſhall have* no Force *on the Servants of GOD: The WORD, who* created, *can alſo* heal, *and* reſtore, *and* raiſe *the* Sick, *the* Lame, *the* Blind, *and the* Dead. *In the* Moral *World alſo He is* Free *at his good* Pleaſure, *and in his own good* Time *to make what Creatures He pleaſeth,* Angels, *or* Men, *or other* different *Forms of* Intelligent Beings, *which we know not: and He can place them alſo in what* Relations *to each*

other He pleaſeth; and altho' without his Interpoſition the Moral *Dutys muſt go on in a perpetual Tenour, yet at his Bidding the* Child *ſhall obey GOD rather than his* Parents, *and the* Parent *ſhall offer up his* Son *unto GOD: Men ſhall act againſt the ſtrongeſt* Propenſions *of* Nature, *and forſake* Father, *and* Mother, Wife, *and* Children, yea and their own Lives alſo, *notwithſtanding the great* Fundamental Law *of* Self Preſervation; *and all this they ſhall do upon the* Principles *of* Natural Religion *as well as* Revealed, *for if there be any* Reaſon *and* Fitneſs *in any thing, it is above all things* Fit *and* Reaſonable *that GOD ſhould be* obeyed. *All* Obligation *proceedeth from Him, but* None *can revert upon Him, but what in his* Promiſes *and* Covenants *he hath taken upon Himſelf. There is no* Neceſſity *to* conſtrain *his* Actions, *and there is no* Law *but his own.* Eternal Wiſdom *to* direct them: *The* Rule *of his* Actions *is ſeen in the* manner *of his* Acting, *and floweth from the Infinite* Perfections *of his* Eſſence *for ever. The* Natural *and the* Moral *World in the ſeveral Kinds, and Differences of Beings are ſo many Exemplications of his Attributes from the Sun to a Stone in the* Natural *World, and from an Angel to a Man in the* Moral. *To take a View of his Operations in the* Natural *World, and ſurvey the Wonderful* Effects *of infinite* Goodneſs moving Him, *and of infinite* Wiſdom directing Him, *and of infinite* Power accompliſhing *his* Works, *I would recommend the three laſt Chapters but one of the Book of* Job, *not as a Poetical Sublime Deſcription only, worthy the Greatneſs and Ma-*

jeſty

jesty of the Speaker, *but more especialy, as an* Hiſtory *of* Creation, *and the* Laws *given to the* Creatures *by their Almighty* Creator; *and then we may joyn in this devout Confeſſion and Acknowledgment with the* Pſalmiſt CXIX. 91. They continue this Day according to thine Ordinances, for all things are thy Servants, and ſerve thee. *And with reſpect to the* Moral *World we may ponder in our Minds what* Job *declareth concerning the* Original Law *given by GOD unto* Man, *who was created in his* Image *to ſerve Him in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs all the days of his Life.* And unto Man He ſaid, Behold the Fear of the Lord, that is Wiſdom, and to depart from Evil is Underſtanding. *This is afterwards taught and inculcated by* David, *and by* Sōlomon *his Son.* The Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wiſdom, and the Knowledge of the HOLY ONE is Underſtanding. Job XXVIII. 28. Pſ. CXI. 10. Prov. I. 7. IX. 10.

For further ſatisfaction in this Point I may refer to the Debate, as it hath been lately managed by the Author of the Eſſay *on* Moral Obligation, *and the* Supplement *thereunto conferred with the* Replys &c. *To which I ſhall add Mr* Clark *of* Hull *his* Examination &c. *together with his* Foundation of Morality, *which is indeed a* Reply *beforehand to all that the Gentlemen of the other ſide have written or ſhall write. His Cenſure in theſe Points is much more juſt than on the* Clarendon *Hiſtory.*

I proceed now to the third Enquiry.

3. *How far the* Law *of* Nature *is Diſcoverable and Practicable by the* Light *of* Nature *alone.*

It is asserted by the great Advocates of Reason, *as well those, who admit, as those, who deny a* Revelation, *that* Reason *alone is sufficient to all the Purposes of Man with reference both to his Temporal and Eternal State, (so far as they, who deny a Revelation, admit of such a State) and it is moreover repeated with unusual Petulancy and Clamour, that Reason* is, *and* ought to be Sufficient.

That the Law *of* Nature *is discoverable by the* Light *of* Nature *without any special* Revelation *is readily admitted; for the Truths of Morality are demonstrable by the clearest and most uncontested Principles of Reason, and they are no sooner proposed and understood, but the Mind immediately assenteth unto them: If Reason ever laboureth under any Error or Ignorance about them, this must be imputed to some Defect and Incapacity in our selves, as that Eye must be faulty, which cannot discern the Object, that is placed before it.*

In this Question the Light *of* Nature *and* Reason *are the same thing, and here again it may be proper to ask whether by* Reason *is to be understood the* particular Reason *of every Man, or the* Collective Reason *of all Men, and whether they speak of* Reason *in its* perfect *or* imperfect *Condition: The* Collective Reason *of all Men assisted with the best Productions of all Lawgivers and Philosophers, which have been preserved thro' the several Ages of the World, and have descended down even to our Times may possibly be thought Equivalent to that perfect* Reason, *and Original* Light *of Nature which shone, as we are taught,*

taught, in the Mind of Man at his first Creation. But where in any Nation or all Nations is this Collective *Reason to be found in that absolute Clearness and Perfection exclusive of Revelation? And if the* Collective *Reason were thus complete, how is it sufficient for the Conduct of every Man, unless every Man himself be Master of it, or conducted by it? But in this Question what They assert is This, That the* Private *and* particular *Reason of every Man is sufficient for Himself, that is the ordinary share of Reason, which the generality of Men enjoy, is sufficient to direct them in all their Concerns and Expectations, as they are Reasonable Creatures. Else the sufficiency of Reason is only an Abstracted Notion without any special Application, unless generaly speaking every Man's Reason be Sufficient.*

The sufficiency *of* Reason *therefore, either* Collective *or* Particular, *they may be pleased to demonstrate by some other Arguments, than by Asserting it* Is so, *because it* Ought *to be* so, *and leaving the other part of the Dilemma upon GOD Himself, if it be* not so.

For it is argued, "that if Man in his Natu-"ral State is accountable for his Actions, and ob-"noxious to Punishment for his Transgressions, "then Man hath a Right to such a Degree of "Natural Light, as is sufficient, when duly ex-"ercised to discover his Duty, and furnish him "with Motives strong enough to engage him in "the Practice of it, and of weight enough to ba-"lance all those Temptations, he is liable to, so, "as to render him inexcusable, if he miscarrys: "Otherwise Man is not fairly dealt by." This, as

I apprehend it, leaveth a Charge of Tyranny and Injuſtice upon GOD, and layeth an Imputation upon the great Maker and Governour of the World, as if He were Defective in his Natural or Moral Capacity, and wanted either Underſtanding or Diſpoſition to have made things better, or to have dealt fairly and equitably by his Creatures.

This is urged in a Round of the ſame Expreſſions over and over, and it is indeed a moſt horrid and Blaſphemous Imputation upon Almighty GOD, if Reaſon *be not ſo* ſufficient, *as they contend,* It is, *or it* ought *to be. Well then, here we ſtand, look upon the Condition of Human Nature, and ſay how great are our Natural Perfections, how clear is our Reaſon, and how ſufficient a Guide hath it proved alone in any Age or Nation without Help and Aſſiſtance from Revelation?*

It is a ſtrange Way to argue againſt Fact *by* Hypotheſis: *and what is the Conſequence? Either that GOD is* unjuſt *if* Reaſon *be not* ſufficient, *or* Man *is* inexcuſable, *if it* be. *If Reaſon is not ſufficient, here is a loud Diſcharge of Blaſphemy upon GOD: and if it be, as they contend it is, or ought to be, Sufficient, The Caſe of Mankind is very dreadful and yet unavoidable as they make it: For the ſufficiency contended for is ſo great, as in all Reaſon and Equity to render thoſe Inexcuſable that miſcarry!*

We are taught indeed, and do accordingly believe, that God created Man upright, *and that we derive our Natural Weakneſs and Depravity from the Tranſgreſſion of our firſt Parents. This the Scriptures teach us, and this ſeemeth a rational*

tional Account to thoſe, who enquire into the Cauſe of ſo Univerſal a Corruption, but will not be allowed by thoſe, who contend for the ſufficiency of Reaſon in its preſent Condition.

Here again they advance Hypotheſis *againſt* Fact, *and argue,* "*It cannot be, that Mankind* "*are ſufferers in Conſequence of* Adam's *Sin, be-* "*cauſe it would be unjuſt and unreaſonable, and* "*ſuch a Conſtitution of Things would be wrong.*" *Which is the ſame Blaſphemy over again, and the ſame Anſwer may ſerve: For either we have derived no Imperfections from* Adam, *or* GOD *is unjuſt, if we have. So that whether we were originaly formed, as we are, or have derived any Imperfections from our firſt Parents Tranſgreſſion, the Conſtitution of things is wrong, and the Charge is both ways reflected upon our Maker; The Fact is, we are far from being in that State of Perfection, in which, we may ſuppoſe,* Adam *was created, and if we ſuppoſe, that Man was created ſuch, as we find him, I am afraid it will by them be thought a juſter Imputation upon the Goodneſs and Power of* GOD, *as it is an Undeniable Evidence of Weakneſs and Imperfection in the Work. But of this as we go on.*

I have not Room to enter upon the Debate of GOD's *Juſtice in involving Poſterity in the Sin of their Firſt Parents. But thus much may be briefly offered, That* Adam *is to be conſidered as a Public Perſon and Repreſentative of his Poſterity, who were virtualy in Him at his Creation, and therefore, his Nature being depraved and corrupted by his Tranſgreſſion, it neceſſarily deriveth a Depravity upon his Poſterity:*

and

and this will anſwer for the Contamination of Sin.

Secondly, Adam *is not to be conſidered only as the Father of Mankind, but as the Head of the Covenant, which GOD made with all Mankind in Him, and this anſwereth for the Imputation of Guilt upon the Breach of the Covenant. As the Children of* Iſrael *were included in the Covenant made with their Fathers, and the Children ſuffered in ſeveral Inſtances for the Tranſgreſſion of their Fathers.*

If it be urged, that Adam's *Facultys were not totaly loſt, but only ſo weakened and impaired in him and his Poſterity, as rendred them inſufficient for the Purpoſes, for which they were originaly given, and that GOD looketh upon Mankind, as thus impaired, and will deal with Man according to the meaſure of his Abilitys. This, one would think, might take off the Imputation of Injuſtice, eſpecialy, if it appeareth that GOD hath taken our Caſe into his gracious Conſideration and Compaſſion, and provided meet Helps and Remedys for the Weakneſs and Imperfections of our Nature.*

But this part of the Conſideration is overlooked, and inſtead of anſwering the Plea they deny the Fact, and all that is offered is, firſt That it doth not appear from Hiſtory, that Adam *ſuffered any ſuch Change by his Tranſgreſſion as is here ſuppoſed, which is to ſay that for any thing, that appears, He was created with the ſame Inordinate Will and Affections, which we find ſo predominant in ourſelves. But we may reaſonably collect, that*

Adam

Adam *came not so imperfect out of the hands of his Creator, and if the Sacred History doth not in so many Words inform us, that* Adam *was created in the very Perfection of his Nature, we cannot think the present Frame of our Mind that Image of GOD, in which He was created; but if the Account in* Genesis *be not so clear, and the Image of GOD doth not imply a Perfection of Mind, rather than stay to dispute that Point at present, we may take what* Solomon *delivereth for a true History of the Fact, a Fact the most evident to him above all others.* Eccles. VII 29. Lo this only have I found, that God created Man upright, but they have sought many Inventions, *or if you please* Ratiocinations.

For accordingly these Advocates for Reason *reason after this Notable manner, That because it is written* their Eyes were opened, and the Lord God said, Behold the Man is become like one of Us, to know Good and Evil, *therefore* Adam*'s discerning Faculty was not* impaired, *but rather* improved *by his Transgression: and then by admirable Consequence they infer, that* Adam*'s Transgression had no Effect upon his Posterity, but the Consequence according to this ludicrous, yet stupid Vein of interpreting is, That the Facultys of his Posterity were so far from being* hurt, *that they* likewise *were* improved *by his Transgression. History, Philosophy and Experience are challenged upon this occasion, but History, Philosophy and Experience reclaim against the Challengers, and do all consent and testify, That the* particular *Disposition and Temper of the* Parents *are* frequently *derived to the* Children:

Children: *That the* General *Depravity and Propenſions are* always *tranſmitted, ſo that the* Depravity *of our* Nature *might ſerve for a* Diſtinction *of our* Species; *For this we may produce the Teſtimony of* Eliphaz *in the* XV. *Chap. of* Job, *v.* 14. What is Man that he ſhould be clean, or he, which is born of a Woman, that he ſhould be righteous? *and of* Bildad *from the* XXV. 4. How then can Man be juſtified with GOD, or how can he be clean, that is born of a Woman? *to which we may add that Queſtion of* Job *himſelf, Chap.* XIV. 4. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? *and the Anſwer is,* not one. *For the* Hiſtory *therefore we will refer to ſeveral Paſſages of the Scripture, for the* Philoſophy *to* Job *and his* Friends, *which are as good Authoritys, as* Ariſtotle, Averroes, *and* Avicenna, *and for* Experience *to all the World, except theſe ſingular People: however at laſt this Effect of* Adam's *Sin for Arguments ſake is ſuppoſed.*

Suppoſing then that Adam's *Sin had ſuch an Effect upon all his Poſterity, but ſtill with great Conſiſtency denying, that it had any upon Himſelf, they proceed to argue by this* Disjunctive, *and* Dilemma. *The Weakneſs we are fallen under by* Adam's *Tranſgreſſion either doth* not *render us incapable of Knowing and doing our Duty without further Aſſiſtance, or it* doth. *If it doth* not, *then* Reaſon *alone is ſufficient, if it* doth *then it is ſaid as aforeſaid, GOD is* unjuſt, *and all is wrong, and if* Reaſon *is* not, *yet it* ought *to be a ſufficient Guide in Religion. O doubtleſs ye are the Men, and Wiſdom ſhall die with you!*

"*Surely,*"

"*Surely,*" *ſay they,* "*Man ought in Juſtice* "*and Equity to have fair play for his Life or ra-* "*for his Soul.*" *Yes ſurely.* "*GOD hath no In-* "*tereſt to ſerve by the Miſeries of his Creatures:*" *no certainly. He hath no pleaſure in the Death of him that dieth, and deſireth not the Death of a Sinner,* "*He is much more concerned to ſecure* "*their Happineſs to them, than they are to ſecure* "*it to themſelves,*" (*that is, He taketh more Care, not, that He is under a greater Obligation*) *If this be their meaning, ſo far we are agreed, and I add, that agreably hereunto, whatever Defects Man lieth under, GOD hath propoſed and provided ſupplies for them; if the Conſtitution of things is wrong, as it is reiterately charged, we ſay, GOD hath* not *made this wrong Conſtitution.* This *is the* Effect *of* Sin *alone, the miſerable Condition, we are fallen into, and we may as well charge it upon GOD, that we are Sinners, as charge it upon his Juſtice, that we are not more perfect than we are.* "*If* Reaſon *be* not *a ſuffi-* "*cient Guide,*" *ſay they,* "*it* ought *to be. If* "*Sin endangereth the whole* Species, *if that Pro-* "*penſity and ſtrong Inclination to Evil, with* "*which we are born, and which cleaveth ſo cloſe* "*to our Conſtitution, be almoſt unavoidable, and* "*by our meer ſtrength alone Inſuperable,*" *why then by Parity of Reaſon after their way, GOD ought not ſo to conſtitute things, as thus to endanger ſuch Multitudes of Men. But He did* not, *and doth* not *conſtitute Things* thus. *Theſe are the neceſſary Effects and Conſequences of Sin; Let them prove then if they can, that God ought to have made Man incapable of Sinning, or to have*

have prevented him from it, or that He is Obliged (*according to their Dialect*) *to deliver Man from these Defects, and to reinstate Him in the Perfection of his first Creation, if they believe, he was so created, or however to mend our Constitution, and make it, as it were, over again. This last we say, GOD hath done, and continueth to do by his* Grace *in* Christ Jesus, *tho' we do not say, He is obliged to do so.*

After all this cometh a Concession, which, were it not presently recalled, seemeth to clear up all these Difficultys, and to vindicate the Justice of GOD in the Condemnation of Sinners. "*For if any* "*one neglects, or abuses any Capacity or Power,* "*he is invested with, or bringeth any Disadvan-*"*tage, or Difficulty, or Danger upon himself,* "*which it was in his Power to have prevented,* "*All this is chargable upon himself;*" *And therefore I say, if Men are capable of committing any Voluntary Sin, they are concluded by this Rule; and by our Natural State we are in a most miserable Condition. If it be the Opinion of these People that Men sin by the Necessity of their Constitution, as it seemeth to be, then indeed all this Concession is revoked, and all those Difficultys, Disadvantages and Dangers, which arise from the Constitution of Things, and could not possibly be avoided, (which, say they, is the present Case) are only chargable, as they affirm, upon the* Author *of that Constitution; and so to justify themselves they go on to Blaspheme their Maker.*

Concerning Divine Revelation, *given to supsupply the Defects of our* Reason, *I shall speak, when the* Expediency *and* Necessity *of it come*

to

to be considered: at present I shall only observe, first, that according to these Writers, Men are made as perfect, as they need be, or the Defects are charged upon their Creator, and GOD is impeached as the Author of Sin, so that they are either justly condemned for the Abuse of their Reason, or they cannot be justly condemned at all for any Defects in their Reason, or Constitution. Secondly, This Blasphemy is a Natural Consequence of making GOD Subject *to* Law, *and under an* Obligation *to act according to the* Reason, *and* Fitness *of* Things. *GOD* must do This, *and GOD* must do That, *and from thence we have that decent Language, that GOD is* Obliged *to* Do so, *and* so: *that if Things are* Not so, *they* ought *to be* so, *and then upon a supposition, that Things are* not, *as they* should *be, there followeth a most hideous Charge of Blasphemy and Outrage upon GOD Himself: and He is defamed as* Unjust *and* Unequal *in his Dealings with Mankind. Which brings to my Mind the* Serpent's *Reasonings with* Eve.

> God therefore cannot hurt you, and be Just;
> Not Just, not God; &c. Par. lost. B. IX.

and of the same kind is his Logic in all the rest of his Speeches.

I have not quoted the Sentences at large, for there is no end of repetition, but I have given their Argument its full Force, and from this View it may appear, that in all that solemnity and shew of close Reasoning there is Nothing but the same thing over again: The Premises *are* Magisterial Assertions, *and the* Conclusion *is* Blasphemy.

As

As to the real ſufficiency of Reaſon, *if we leave* Suppoſition, *and found the Determination of the Queſtion upon* Fact, *the Iſſue will be very ſhort; and then we muſt refer to the State and Condition of the World under the Conduct of* Natural Light alone, *both for the* Knowledge *and* Practice *of the* Law *of* Nature.

When it is ſaid, that Reaſon *or the* Light *of* Nature *is ſufficient, we muſt underſtand, either, that every Man hath a ſufficient Degree of it for his own Conduct, or elſe, that he muſt be guided by the Light and Direction of others. To give therefore the utmoſt Advantage in this Argument, by the* Light *of* Nature *we will underſtand the higheſt Degrees of it in the moſt illuminated Minds, and then for the Deciſion of the Point we muſt have recourſe to the beſt Writers upon the* Religion *and* Law *of* Nature, *which the* Heathen *World hath produced: and here without taking Exception, as might be done, to any ſparks of Knowledge, which might have riſen from ſome imperfect* Traditionary *Revelation, it is the more obſervable that the* Light *of* Nature *even* ſo *aſſiſted, was not clear enough to give Men a full and complete a View of the* Law *of* Nature *in all the ſeveral Dutys, and Branches of it: Notwithſtanding therefore the Pretences of ſome great Patrons of Natural Religion to produce a* perfect Scheme *of* Morality *from the* Greek *and* Roman *Philoſophers, we may venture to pronounce that the* Scheme *will be* imperfect, *tho' we ſhould allow them to take in Thoſe, who have lived ſince the* Goſpel *with thoſe, who lived* Before. *In the mean time it may be very proper for theſe Gentlemen*

men to shew that the Heathen *World in the several Ages and Nations of it was possessed at once of so perfect a System; and it may be no less Entertaining to shew what an* Excellent *Guide the* Light *of* Nature is, *and* hath *been throughout all Ages and Nations both* before *and* since *the Publication of the* Gospel, *and they may take a View of it, if they please, from the* Cape *of* Good Hope *thro' both the* Indies, *and survey its Native Beauty and Perfection from the Polite* Hottentot *to the Politer* Tartar, *and* Chinese.

The Ancient Sects of the Sabians, *and* Magians *do bear an Evident Affinity to the old* Patriarchal *Religion: the* Magian *Theology, as refined by* Zoroastres *carrieth a Visible Allusion to the Scriptures, and the great* Impostor *himself pretended to an Immediate* Revelation.

The Sabians *were the Fathers of* Celestial *Iaolatry in Worshipping the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, as so many Divinitys enshrined, and dwelling in their respective Orbs: But afterwards they made Images of them also. Whether the* Magians *were realy Idolaters, that is whether they realy Worshipped the* Sun, *and the* Sacred Fires, *may possibly bear some good Disputation; For they seem to have looked upon the* Sun, *as the* Temple *of GOD, in which He dwelt, and as a* symbol *and* manifestation *of his* Presence: *So likewise upon their* Fires *as* symbols *also; But this is certain, their Theology at first was a Corrupted Tradition of* Noah's *Religion, and the Refinements of* Zoroastres *are evidently drawn from the History and Theology of* Moses *disguised and dressed up in* another *Form. But were his* Theology *never*

ver so unexceptionable in other respects, still the avowed Allowance of the grossest Incest is so flagrant a Corruption in his Moral *Scheme, as undeniably evinceth the great Darkness, and Corruption of their Minds, who did not discern and abhor so abominable a Practice.*

Ancient as the Sabians *were the Descendants of* Ham *thro' the Branches of* Cush, Mizraim, *and* Canaan, *and they may be accounted the Founders of* Terrestial *Idolatry in first* Deifying Men, *to which they (the* Egyptians *especialy) added the Worship of* Beasts *also. And since Idolatry is thus the Universal Charge upon the* Heathen *World, It is alone an invincible Proof of the* Insufficiency *of the* Light *of* Nature *and the* Reason *of Mankind in the Conduct of Religion; and we may observe, how the* Light *of* Nature *grew more and more obscured by the Neglect and Abuses of it, till in some Parts of the World, it was sunk and almost stifled in Ignorance and Error.*

But passing over the Heathen *World where the Theology of* Moses *was not known, or if known to some* Sages, *disguised and dissembled under other Colours, let us look into the State of* Natural Religion, *not only* since *the Appearance of the* Gospel, *but even* in *those Ages and Nations, where the* Gospel *hath shined in the greatest Purity and Lustre, and then the Question is how far the* Light *of* Nature *is* sufficient *in Contradistinction and Opposition to the* Light *of* Revelation.

It is most justly and unanswerably observed, that the Differences *among the* Old *Philosophers in the great Questions of* Morality *and* Natural Reli-

Religion *are so many Arguments, that the Light of Nature in them was not sufficient, and the learned Disputes, which are now held among us even under the Light of the Gospel concerning the Foundation, and Obligation, and the very Principles of Morality, show, that the most Excellent Writers have not yet arrived at such certain Conclusions, as the Patrons of the* Independent *Scheme will acquiesce in; while on the other hand those strenuous Advocates for the sole sufficiency of Reason have given the World such admirable Specimens of its Perfection!*

But after all, if these zealous Assertors of the sufficiency of Reason in this its weak and depraved Condition will but admit of one plain and easy Distinction I hope this Controversy may be composed, and all Differences between us settled to our Mutual Satisfaction: The Distinction occurreth several Times in the following Discourses, and it is This. *There is a great Difference between being able Originaly and by our selves alone to Investigate and discover the great Truths of Natural Religion, and the Discerning and assenting to them, when discovered. Reason therefore is sufficient in one sense, and insufficient in another. Left to itself in this its weak and depraved Condition Reason alone hath not been able to recover Men from Superstition and Idolatry, nor to produce one Uniform and perfect Scheme of Morality; Nor in any parts of the Heathen World do we find it sufficient unto this day. But assisted and instructed by those, who know the Truth, Reason is capable of apprehending it, and as fast, as it discerneth it, it assenteth unto it.*

That the Light of Nature then is sufficient with proper Helps we do readily allow: Abstractedly considered both the Light and the Law of Nature are perfect: The imperfection, which appeareth in Both, is owing to the Imperfection and Depravity of Man. The Light of Nature is capable of continual Improvement or Diminution, and if it be impaired by Sin, and overclouded with Error, still as long as GOD affordeth Means of Instruction, if any refuse the Assistance, that is offered, the Goodness of GOD is absolved, and the Fault lieth wholly upon themselves.

All, who own a Revelation will surely receive Natural Religion as taught and included in that Revelation, and they, who disown a Revelation, may do well to consider, whether the Scripture Morality be the Dictate of meer Natural Reason, or the Teachings of GOD Himself? If the former, they are obliged to receive the Religion of Nature as therein delineated: if the latter they are not the less obliged to receive it: for whatever dispute there may be about the Revelation, there can be none about the Doctrine. From these Considerations of the Light and the Law of Nature, especialy from the Insufficiency of the Light alone, and the Condition of Mankind ever since the Transgression of our first Parents, or, to avoid all Cavil, ever since Men Universaly became Sinners, I pass now

II. *To the* Expediency *and* Necessity *of* Revelation.

The Consideration of the Necessity *may seem indeed to supersede that of the* Expediency. *For what*

what is Neceſſary is Expedient, tho' what is Expedient is not therefore Neceſſary: However ſince this way of ſpeaking hath obtained, I ſhall take them Both in order, and before I proceed to either, I will firſt in few Words explain what is meant by Expediency *and what by* Neceſſity, *as one may be compared with, and diſtinguiſhed from the other.*

By Expediency *we commonly underſtand ſome Convenience and Advantage for the readier Diſpatch, and the ſurer Succeſs of our Affairs; or elſe we mean by it a proper Behaviour in any particular Juncture, and ſpecial Circumſtances of Things. In the firſt ſenſe our Bleſſed Lord telleth his Diſciples* John XVI. 7. It is expedient for you that I go away &c. *In the other ſenſe St* Paul *writeth to the* Corinthians, All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient.

By Neceſſity *we underſtand ſuch a Situation and Poſture of Affairs, as requireth certain peculiar Means for the Redreſs and Conduct of them; and when we ſpeak of the Neceſſity of Revelation, our Meaning is, that Man being in a ſtate of Guilt and Condemnation could not receive Aſſurance of Pardon and Salvation any other way. By the Light of Nature alone Men could not diſcover the Terms of Pardon and Acceptance, and therefore ſo far as they are neceſſary to be known there is a Neceſſity of ſome Revelation to declare them.*

This then is the Difference between Expediency *and* Neceſſity: Neceſſity *is* Abſolute, Expediency *is comparatively preferable to any other Means: the* Expediency *of Revelation therefore will appear, as it is the beſt and readieſt Help*

for the Defects of our Natural Powers: the Neceſſity *of it will appear from the Condition, we are in by reaſon of Sin: It is* expedient *with reſpect to the Dutys of Natural Religion: It is* Neceſſary *with regard to our Eternal Salvation: It is* expedient, *as it teacheth us the Way of GOD more perfectly: It is* Neceſſary, *as it openeth unto us the Gate of Everlaſting Life.*

1. *Firſt for the* Expediency *of Revelation, which I ſhall briefly propoſe in theſe three Inſtances.*

1. *As it teacheth the way of GOD more perfectly and plainly.*

2. *As it layeth Morality on a right Foundation.*

3. *As it furniſheth proper Motives and Enforcements of Practice.*

1. *Revelation is* Expedient *as it teacheth the way of GOD more perfectly, and plainly.*

It is not needful to enter upon a Compariſon of the Ancient Philoſophers with the Scriptures. For how clear ſoever their Expreſſions may be, yet their Syſtems being formed upon imperfect Models according to the ſeveral Schools, they followed, muſt needs be defective, and obſcure, compared with the Uniform Agreement and Perſpicuity of the Sacred Writings: In their beſt Syſtems Virtue is placed between two imaginary Extreams, and meaſured by a ſort of Mathematical Equation; where its approaches to either, leave it in too pendulous and doubtful a Condition; and and the Definitions, however juſt, are ſome of them both dark and jejune. That part of Natu-

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ral Religion which relateth to GOD is almoſt omitted, and that part which relateth to a Man's ſelf and his Neighbour is in ſome Inſtances incomplete and Erroneous, But the Scriptures are Abſolute both in Fulneſs of Matter, and clearneſs of Expreſſion: Whatever Beautys may be admired in the Ancients, there is a Simplicity and Majeſty in the Scriptures, which deliver the great Dutys of Religion and Morality with an Equal Plainneſs and Solemnity. The Decalogue alone compriſeth more, than Volumes of the Heathen Moraliſts, and the Sermon on the Mount far ſurpaſſeth the nobleſt and moſt exalted ſtrains of the Greek *and* Roman *Writers, and if all other Writings were loſt, there would be no Lack of them, ſo long, as the Scripture remaineth, that moſt precious Treaſure and Eternal Fountain of Light and Wiſdom, and Truth. The Precepts of the Moraliſts regulated the outward Actions only, but the Word of GOD reacheth unto the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart; One forbiddeth the Commiſſion of Sin, the Other the firſt Motions and Inclinations towards it.*

It is objected indeed that the Scriptures are obſcure in ſome points of Natural Religion, but it is objected to thoſe parts eſpecialy, which advance Morality to an Height and Purity, which the meer Natural Man cannot attain, and therefore the Precepts are not only excepted to as obſcure, but they are exploded alſo as Unreaſonable, and impracticable; The Forgiveneſs of Injurys, the Loving our Enemys, the Doing good to them, that hate us are ſtrange Doctrines to Fleſh and Blood. Nothing ſheweth the Weakneſs and Depravity of

our Nature more than the Purity and Perfection of our Rule: It argueth a great Firmneſs and Strength of Mind to forgive, and to Do good to the Unthankful giveth a Godlike kind of Superiority. The Heathen Writers could obſerve, that Revenge betrayeth a weak and impotent Mind; the weakeſt Underſtandings are ſubject to the ſtrongeſt Paſſions, and the Prevalence of this Paſſion in the weaker Sex ſheweth that it proceedeth from a Poorneſs and Infirmity of Soul. There is a Neceſſity of maintaining the Lives and Propertys of Men, and what is dearer to brave and generous Natures their Libertys and their Fame, by a ſteady and impartial Diſtribution of Juſtice and Judgment; But if Men were more Peaceable, and willing to part with their Cloakes, tho' not with their Eſtates, and to bear with ſmaller Injurys rather than retort them, there would not, I preſume any very ill Conſequences follow from cheriſhing a Spirit of Meekneſs, Charity and Forgiveneſs: Theſe Precepts are liable to no Miſtakes but thoſe of Hypocriſy and Superſtition, and it is the Perverſeneſs of Men, not any Obſcurity in the Injunctions, which createth any Difficulty either in the Underſtanding them, or Obeying them.

2. *Revelation is expedient as it layeth Morality upon a right Foundation.*

The Ancient Moraliſts among the Greeks, *founded their Morality upon the* χρήσιμον, *the* εὔζηλον, *the* ὠφέλιμον, *the* συμφέρον, *the* αἱρετὸν, *the* ἡδὺ, *and the* πρέπον, *and* καλὸν, *and upon the* ἀγαθὸν *and the* δίκαιον, *all which* Tully *happily compriſeth under the* Utile *and* Honeſtum, *to which we may add.*

add from others, the Bona *the* Jucunda *and* Idonea. *Their Practice they distinguished into the* κατόρθωμα *by which they signified the most perfect and Heroic Exercise of Virtue, and the* καθῆκον, *by which they understood the common and lower Dutys of it. The one alluding to an Absolute Rectitude, the other to a suitable Fitness and Convenience of Things. They differed in their Notions according to their several Sects, and in the Variety of Opinions we find them discoursing on Benevolence of Mind, and Beneficence of Action, upon the Beauty of Virtue and a Moral Sense of Turpitude and Honour, which cometh to the same thing with the* πρέπον *and* Honestum. *In these Notions they are followed by several Modern Writers, who do found Morality on the Truth and Reason and Fitness of Things, which answer to the Terms above mentioned, and take in the* Utile *as well as the* Honestum, *if they understand by the Fitness of things any Application of them to an End; otherwise they mean nothing at all, and an independent absolute Fitness is, as we have seen, an unintelligible, and insignificant Term.*

I will only add, that to place Morality in the Reason and Fitness of things without regard to any Law, and without respect to any End, is to lay it upon a Foundation, that will bear no Weight, or rather upon no Foundation at all, For the Reason and Fitness of things thus abstractedly understood are but other Words for Morality, and when we talk of the Foundation of Morality, it is absurd to say, It is founded on it self.

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Thoſe alſo among the Moderns, who found Morality upon ſelf Love, or Benevolence, or more truly upon Both, do found it likewiſe upon a precarious Bottom. Theſe are Both of them rather Principles of Action, than any Rule or Meaſure of Duty, and their Operative Force dependeth very much on the Paſſions and Affections, or rather upon Temper and Conſtitution.

Self Love not ſweetned by Benevolence is rather a Baſe and Pernicious, than a Generous and Virtuous Principle, and Benevolence not tempered with ſelf Love is an Indication of a Weak and improvident Mind: But ſuppoſing them duely regulated and equaly poiſed, ſo as not to preponderate Either againſt the Other, then indeed, during the fair Seaſon, and Proſperity of Virtue, they will amicably cooperate together, and incline Men not only to be Juſt, but excite them alſo to many generous and good-natured Actions: But when Storms ariſe, and they find themſelves expoſed to Miſery and Ruin, the Principle of ſelf Love is moſt likely to prevail, and the Charms of Virtue will prove too Weak, when thus they ſee her in diſtreſs.

Add to theſe therefore all the Beautys of Virtue preſented by the fineſt and moſt exalted ſenſe of Morality, its intrinſic Excellence and Perfection: the Delight it bringeth to a good Mind in Speculation, heightened and improved ten thouſand times by Practice: Theſe alſo, tho' joyned by the others, we ſhall find too weak to bear the Weight of Miſery and Deſtruction in the Cauſe: It requireth an eminent Degree of Fortitude to forgoe the Eaſe and Affluence and the Pleaſures of Life,

Life, a much greater to exchange them for Poverty and Diſtreſs; When they are ſore preſſed, Men will think it one ſtep to Happineſs to be removed from Miſery, and when they come to ponder the Moments of Happineſs againſt the Scale of Miſery, if Virtue hath no Baſis but herſelf to reſt on, the Weight of Calamity will oppreſs her, and either Virtue or Life will be forſaken, when thus miſerably ſhe becomes her own Reward.

I will advance one ſtep further and aſſert, that they, who propoſe Temporal Happineſs as the End of Moral Virtue muſt alſo fail, not only becauſe of the different Judgments of Mankind concerning it, and of the Uncertainty of all Temporal Felicity, but for this never failing Reaſon, becauſe ſuppoſing Happineſs to riſe in proportion to Virtue, Human Virtue can never be ſo perfect, as to ſecure any great and laſting Degrees of Happineſs, For if Happineſs riſeth in proportion to Virtue, every Degree of Vice is an Abatement of it, and therefore conſidering, how the beſt Natures are tinctured and alloyed with Evil we cannot upon this ground promiſe any ſincere Happineſs to the Practice of a mixed and irregular Virtue.

Happineſs, however it may be miſtaken, is the End of all Rational Agents, and it is a firm and immoveable Principle, that Men cannot (even for the ſake of Virtue it ſelf) be obliged to expoſe themſelves to Miſery without the Promiſe, and Proſpect of an Abundant Compenſation. The great Principle of Self Love, which may at other times excite to Virtue, and carry us out to Acts of Friendſhip and Benevolence, will in great Preſſures, and Extremitys call us home from the Aſſiſtance

ſiſtance of others to take Care of, and Defend our ſelves.

I conclude therefore that neither the Reaſon and Fitneſs of Things, nor the Pleaſures of Benevolence, nor the Beauty of Virtue, nor the pureſt Moral ſenſe will of themſelves, or ſeparately or conjoyned be able to confirm the Mind of Man againſt Miſery, Danger and Death without the Hopes of greater Happineſs to ſucceed.

But after all the vain Efforts of Reaſon left to herſelf alone, or acting independently on Revelation, Revelation at laſt cometh into her Relief, and layeth Morality on a right Foundation: It fixeth and propoſeth the Rewards of Virtue, and expreſly teacheth, what indeed we might infer from its Conformity to our Nature, that the Dutys of it are the Will and Commands of GOD in order to our Happineſs. "For this is the Will of "GOD, even your Sanctification," which implieth both Holineſs here, and perfect Holineſs crowned with Happineſs hereafter.

This leadeth to the third Argument for the Expediency of Revelation, and that is Revelation is expedient.

3. *As it furniſheth proper Motives and Enforcements of Practice.*

The great Motives of Action are drawn from the Nature and Certainty of their Conſequences, and theſe Conſequences are drawn: The Nature of them from the Relation Man beareth unto GOD, and the Rank, he holdeth in the intelligent Creation: The Certainty of them from the Word and Declaration of GOD Himſelf.

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I pass over the imperfect Knowledge the Heathen had of a Future State, and shall only observe, that altho' they were involved in great Darkness and Superstition, yet even their Superstition prevailed more, than the Precepts of their Philosophers, or the Rigor of their Laws, to keep them under some Regard to Virtue; For their Superstitions, however vain and idle, as infused by the Songs of their Poets, and dressed up in the Rites of their Religion, were nevertheless raised from a true Foundation, for they are no other, than the Tradition of some ancient Doctrines varied and obscured by the Fables, and Mythology of the several Nations, thro' which it was derived.

But to give any Motives whatever their due Influence, they must be clear and Evident. Opinions will never operate with any equable Force and Uniformity, and we may see, how strong the Motives must be to have any general Effect, when we find that all the Motives offered in the Gospel are not in Fact sufficient to engage Men in their Duty, altho', like the Evidences of the Gospel, they are abundantly sufficient in their own Nature, and will therefore equaly subject the Disobedient and Unbelievers unto the greater Condemnation.

The Motives and Enforcements which the Gospel furnisheth are beyond all Comparison greater and stronger, than Reason and Philosophy, or even the more Ancient Revelations from the Beginning of the World unto Christ *had ever offered to Mankind. For He alone hath proposed them in the fullest and most convincing manner, as* He alone hath brought Life and Immortality to Light thro' the Gospel.

But

But beſides the Motives and Enforcements drawn from another World in a full diſplay of Man's future State, we have moreover many others from the Authority, the Love, and Condeſcenſion of our Redeemer: His Authority, as a Teacher ſent from GOD: His infinite Love and Condeſcenſion in taking our Nature, the Form of a Servant upon Him, and Humbling Himſelf even unto the Death of the Croſs for our Salvation: All theſe, even all that He hath done and ſuffered for us, call up all the Powers and Energy, the Love and Gratitude of our Souls, and inſpire us with the warmeſt and ſublimeſt Sentiments of Humility, Holineſs and Charity, ſo that we may truly ſay, the great Articles of our Faith are the ſureſt and moſt Efficacious Principles of our Practice.

From this Conſideration of the Expediency *I paſs now in the laſt place to*

2. *The* Neceſſity *of* Revelation.

It is and hath been the Inadvertency of ſome well meaning People to argue the Neceſſity of Revelation in too General and Abſolute Terms, as if it were neceſſary on GOD's part, that He ſhould make a Revelation of his Will in the great Queſtion of Pardon and Salvation. If this be ſimply held without ſtating the Queſtion, and carefully diſtinguiſhing in what ſenſe and how far this Neceſſity is to be aſſerted, we may involve ourſelves in great and inextricable Difficultys from certain Conſequences, which we can neither clear nor deny, with regard to the State and Condition of Man ever ſince the Fall, But upon a true State and Explanation of the Point we ſhall be able to anſwer

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the Clamour of those bold Blasphemers, who fear not to prescribe Laws to their Maker, and to charge Him with Partiality and Injustice to his Creatures.

We must distinguish therefore between a Necessity of Revelation on GOD's part, and in what sense He may be thought under any Obligation to give it, and the Necessity of a Revelation on Man's part, and the strict Obligation, he is under, to receive it.

For the Necessity on GOD's part, it is not simply and in itself necessary, that GOD should give us such a Revelation, as He hath vouchsafed us, it not being necessary that He should give us any Revelation at all, any more, than it was necessary, that GOD should receive us to Pardon after we have Transgressed: For GOD had given Man a Law and Covenant at his first Creation, and upon the Breach of that Covenant he had nothing to plead in Bar of Judgment; That GOD was pleased to remit the severest part of the Sentence, and receive Mankind to Favour is an Act of his free Grace and Mercy, and therefore this Revelation is, on GOD's part, an Act of Free Grace and Mercy also. Since then it is absolutely of GOD's Free Grace that we are saved, the Revelation on his part is only necessary as the Pardon could not be offered, nor the Terms proposed any other way. See Serm. III. p. 96.

I pass now to consider the Necessity of a Revelation on Man's part, and this will appear from the State and Condition he was in upon his Transgression: This was a State of Guilt and Condemnation, out of which he was not able to deliver him-

himself, and therefore could only be delivered by that Authority, against which he had offended. Transgression of the Law is Sin, and the Wages of Sin is Death: a Fatal Sentence, which must be executed, or remitted: if remitted, it must be remitted Simply, or upon Terms: But that it will be remitted at all Man cannot say, much less that it will be remitted simply without any Conditions, nor upon what Conditions could he discover, and therefore it is in GOD alone to declare upon what Terms He will pardon. It is said that GGD will pardon Sinners upon Repentance, which is true indeed, as Repentance is founded upon Scripture Terms: Otherwise Repentance is a wide and uncertain Word, and supposing no other Reparation required, we cannot presume that any Repentance is sufficient, which falleth short of a thorow Reformation of Life, and Purification of Mind. It is therefore utterly inconsistent with repeated Transgressions, whether we relapse into Old Sins, or fall into New. I have not room to argue the Case at length; but these Positions, I think, are clear. That it is impossible for us to restore our selves to GOD's Favour, unless we could restore our selves to our Innocence and Integrity. The Imputation of Guilt must be removed, or Man cannot be delivered. The Law exacteth an entire Obedience, and he, that offendeth in one Point is guilty of all. *And therefore some Interposition, some Remedy, some Means are Necessary to release him both from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin. What these are, it is not possible for Man to determine. It is therefore in GOD alone to declare his gracious Pardon, and the Terms, upon*

which

which He will extend it. This we say, GOD hath been pleased to declare by such an express Revelation, as is highly conformable to his Wisdom, Justice and Mercy, and giveth Men the fullest Assurance of Pardon, and Acceptance at his Hands.

This, with what I have delivered upon this Subject in the following Sheets, may be sufficient to represent the great Necessity *of* Revelation, *to assure Men upon what Terms and Conditions GOD is graciously pleased to admit them to Pardon, and to advance them to Eternal Happiness, and Glory.*

It only remaineth now, that I make some Return to those rude and noisy Objections, which I find advanced of late by a strange sort of a Concurrence in the Writings of those, who admit as well as of those, who deny a Revelation. The Objections for the Substance of them are such as these. Why the Revelation was not made Complete and Entire, as it now standeth, from the Beginning? Why as it was given in several parts and portions from Abraham *to* Christ *it was not* Then, *and hath not been* Since, *and is not* Now *Universal? And why where it is published it is not Effectual?*

To these I shall give a general answer very briefly in Point of Equity, and in Point of Reason, and a more special One in Point of Fact.

1. *In Point of Equity, as it was an Act of Free Grace in GOD to give any Revelation at all, the manner of giving it is entirely at his good Pleasure, both as to the Time and Extent of the Dispensation: That GOD pardoned* Adam *for the Breach*

Breach of his Original Covenant in the same Capacity, in which he sinned, as the Father and Representative of Mankind, and admitted him into a new Covenant in the same Publick Character, which consequently included his Posterity; so that as they were liable to the Consequences of his Guilt and Corruption, they were also admitted to Grace and Pardon, while they were in their Father's Loins: That the Promise of Pardon thus given was sufficient for all, who accepted it, and looked for Salvation on the Terms then proposed: That the Sacrifice of Christ *was as Effectual, as if it had been immediately offered, in regard of which and the determinate Counsel of GOD, He may be truly called,* The Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World: *That if Men, when they were graciously restored, sinned yet again, and estranged themselves from GOD, and fell into all manner of Wickedness, It is just in GOD to give them up to the Vileness and Corruption of their own depraved Nature: They are in the Condition of Rebels, who have been pardoned, and do yet rebel again, and it is not to be expected, that GOD should renew his Revelations, as often as Men shall despise and reject them.*

2. *In point of Reason, why the Revelation was not made all at once and compleated from the Beginning? Besides the Impropriety of the Objection, as if we were to direct the Counsel and Actions of the Almighty, I answer, It was impossible in the Course and Nature of the thing itself. For at that time the Revelation consisting of a Promise, that* the Seed of the Woman should Bruise the Serpent's head, *the Woman*

as

as yet had not conceived, nor was there a Posterity, to whom the Revelation should be made, nor indeed could it be made till several Ages had passed and the Fulness of Time appointed for it was come: It was highly reasonable and also necessary, that the promised Seed should be pointed out and ascertained that He might be surely known, and distinguished, when He should come; and for that Reason as well as to preserve the true Religion Abraham *was called, and his Posterity chosen, and it was gradualy revealed that this promised Seed should be of* Abraham *thro'* Isaac *and* Jacob: *of the Tribe of* Judah, *and of the Lineage of* David: *To this purpose there preceeded a long Train of Prophecys so very particular and circumstantial, setting forth, besides his Family, the Time and Place of his Birth, the Time and Manner also of his Death, that these Prophecys could not be answered, nor the Revelation made in any other Age or Period of the World. It may as well be demanded, why our Blessed Saviour appeared so soon, as why He appeared no sooner, and why He appeareth not to every Age and in every Nation, as why He appeared only once in a small Corner of the World? However we may return an Answer by applying the Words of St* Paul, *where he teacheth the true purpose of* Christ's entring into Heaven it self, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Not that He should offer Himself *often*, as the High Priest entreth every Year into the Holy Place with the Blood of others (For then must He *often* have suffered since the Foundation of the World) but Now *once* in the End of the World,

hath He appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself. Hebr. IX. 24, 25, 26.

3. *In Point of Fact I shall answer more specialy, as the Objection is made against Revelation, because it is not Universal.*

It seemeth to be the Opinion of one Objector, to whom I paid my Regards some few pages since, that Revelation is not Necessary, because Reason is, or ought to be sufficient; otherwise the Original Constitution af Things must have been very Defective. To which I have answered already, and therefore shall only add, that Revelation is not only Necessary to supply the Defects, and correct the Errors of Reason, for in that sense we say rather, that it is Expedient; but it is Necessary, to declare GOD's general Pardon, and to mark out the way to Salvation. It is but one part of Revelation to give us a more perfect Rule of Life, and for this our Adversarys do loudly contend, that it is not necessary, because Reason is or ought to be Sufficient; It is another part of Revelation to acquaint us upon what Terms we shall be accepted in a right Practice and Application of the Rule; and Revelation in this sense is strictly Necessary,

But if it be Necessary in any sense, then it is objected, It ought to have been and to be at all times Universal, "Otherwise numberless Millions "of People would have been very unequaly and "unkindly dealt by, because they have been de-"stitute of such a Divine Revelation, as would "have supplied the Defects, which arise from the "Original Constitution of things." He should have said from Sin, *for as I have observed before,*

there

there is no Defect in the Original Constitution of Things; and upon this Fallacy of assigning a wrong Cause all this mighty show of Argumentation doth turn.

In another Piece, to which I have likewise paid my Regards, the Objection is formed upon this Nice Calculation; "If Reason be not a sufficient Guide in Matters of Religion, then five "parts of six of Mankind at this present time "have no sufficient Guide at all, and for four "thousand Years together nine hundred ninety "nine parts of a thousand had no sufficient Guide "to direct them to their Duty," or, as it is more justly expressed a few lines after, "to teach them "the way, by which we may be accepted by "GOD.

If Reason then is not a sufficient Guide, the Charge of the Defect is by both these Objectors reflected upon GOD, both as Reason is Insufficient, and Revelation is not Universal.

In what respects Reason is not sufficient thro' its great Depravity to direct and contain us in our Duty, and because of its natural Limitations that it is not sufficient to teach us the way, how we may be accepted of GOD, I have discoursed already: Upon the one I have argued for the Expediency, upon the other for the Necessity of Revelation.

But as to the Fact we say, that Revelation, so far as it immediately concerned all Mankind, was Universal, and that it did not continue so, that in any Age and Nation it was lost or defaced, and was not preserved in its Original Truth and Simplicity, this is owing to the Degeneracy and Cor-

ruption of Mankind; the want of it therefore is only chargeable upon themſelves, and ſo we ſhall find this exact Computation both of Time and Numbers to be wrong: It was Univerſal from Adam *to* Noah, *and from* Noah *to* Abraham; *From* Abraham *to* Moſes *GOD was not wanting to Mankind, and we may trace the Remains at leaſt of that Primitive Religion thro' ſeveral great Extents over all the then known Habitable World, of which ſufficient Proof might be given by an Enumeration, and Induction of particulars; but for this I ſhall refer to the moſt inſtructive and entertaining Travels of* Cyrus, *which may be read with equal Pleaſure and Improvement, as they have been preſented to the World by an excellent Hand in the Spirit and Manner of the great* Fenelon: *and more eſpecialy I would refer to the two Diſcourſes of the* Theology *and* Mythology *of the* Ancients *at the End. It is true, there is great Variety in the manner of Tradition, but it is true alſo, that in the main Points there is as great a Conſent: The Conſent is an Evidence of an Original Revelation, the Variety is an Evidence of the Fallibility and Deviation of Human Reaſon in Subjects of Divine Revelation: and Both of them give great Evidence to the* Scriptures, *that they contain the Original Revelation, foraſmuch as in them alone all their Errors are corrected, and all their Difficultys are cleared, and in the* Goſpel *their* Mighty Prince *is fully revealed: The great* Mediator: *the* Light *and* Saviour *of the World!*

There ſtill remaineth another Queſtion upon this point, and that is, why the Goſpel-Revela-

tion

tion Now it is made, hath not been, and is not yet Universal?

To this the Answer is, that we are not obliged to account for the Ways and Dispensations of Almighty GOD; But the same Answer, which satisfieth the Question, why it was not Earlier, will suffice also in this other, why it is not Now Universal, so far, I mean, as to vindicate the Justice of GOD, not to give the Reason of his Proceedings. For if his Justice is absolved in deferring it to the Whole World for so many Ages, it is equaly absolved in deferring it still longer to any part of the World; and as none ever perished before the Gospel, but by their own Default, none shall ever perish for want of this Revelation, but by their own Default: That as Multitudes rejected it, when it was first offered to the World, and as it is lost in many Nations, which did once enjoy the Light of the Gospel, the Charge reverteth upon the Infidelity and Wickedness of Man: we may truly say, that the Gospel was so widely spread by the first Preachers of it, that their Sound went out into all the Earth; and their Words unto the Ends of the World. *But the Complaint is just, which is made in the Words of* Esaias, Lord, who hath believed our Report? *GOD knoweth his own Times; the Gospel might possibly have been rejected by those Nations, to which it hath not been offered, and will also be accepted by them, when it shall be rejected by us, and GOD shall have removed our Candlestick also. GOD forced it not upon the World, and they who could resist the Evidence, with which it was introduced, would resist any Evi-*

Evidence, that is fit to be offered to a reasonable Creature; and then the Question of these Objectors ought to be, Why was not the Evidence stronger, not why the Revelation is not Universal? Since the Evidence was rejected both by Jew *and* Gentile, *and since it is now rejected by these Objectors themselves!*

One Point more remaineth, Why the Revelation, where it is received is not Effectual? As to the Revelation its not being Effectual, that is owing to the same Reason with its not being Universal, namely to the great Depravity and Corruption of Human Nature, and it may as well be asked, why Free Agents are not driven and compelled into their Duty, as why all Men, to whom a Revelation hath been offered, do not receive it, and why those, who do receive it, do not obey it: But these Objections are vain, till they can prove, as in the former Case, that GOD is obliged (according to their Dialect) to offer irresistible Evidence to Moral Agents, and to cause the Gospel to be Universaly received, as well as Universaly published, and when Universaly received, that it be also Universaly obeyed, and further, that the Grace to obey it be as irresistible, as the Evidence to prove it. GOD hath graciously done his part towards us, let us seriously consider what we ought to do.

Surely it is very weak to argue, that because Reason is not Effectual, therefore Revelation not being Effectual is also insufficient; for whether Revelation be Effectual or no, It is a great Help and Assistance to Reason, and when Reason still faileth, tho' assisted by Revelation, this is an irrefragable

refragable Argument of the Insufficiency of Reason, but none, that Revelation is insufficient for the Conduct and Conviction of a Rational Creature. Revelation has effected these two things, which Reason in its present State could not of it self perform. It hath given us a more perfect Law by improving Moral Dutys into Evangelical Graces; and it hath afforded the strongest Motives that can be offered to a reasonable Nature: In these Respects we say it is sufficient, and those will be obnoxious to the greater Condemnation, with whom it is not Effectual.

I will only add, that as one Objector acknowledgeth Revelation to be useful for curing Men of Superstition, and bringing them to Reason, let him say in his turn, why Revelation, so far as it is conducive to so excellent an End, is not, and hath not been Universal in all Ages, and why it is not now extended to those Barbarous and Ignorant Nations, who may be truly said to lie in Darkness and in the Shadow of Death.

In the Prosecution of this Work I have differed from the Sentiments of two very Great and Extraordinary Men, but in Points so clear, that I trust, I shall be acquitted of all Pride and Petulance. Great Men love to have their peculiar Notions, and Singularitys, and it cannot be expected that the World should subscribe implicitly to their Opinions. Mr Locke *I have long thought to have been mistaken in some Points of Philosophy: and the incomparable Sir* Isaac Newton *happens* demonstrably *to be so in the* Egyptian *Chronology. With Respect to Mr* Locke *I have the Concurrence of a very great and Con-*

ſummate Author; *and I eſteem it an Honour to agree with Him, wherever we treat of the ſame Subject. And to the Authoritys I have produced with regard to Sir* Iſaac Newton, *I may add that of Mr* Shuckford, *which I had not ſeen Time enough to refer to it before.*

No one will ever make himſelf conſiderable meerly by Cavilling at, and Contradicting the greateſt and moſt excellent Authors; But it is the true Freedom of Thinking not to chain our ſelves to their Opinions, and as the Sacred Writers fall under the Liberty of Thought, as much as any other, it can be no Arrogance to diſſent from the greateſt Names, and in all Points of Difference I ſhall not think it any Partiality to ſhow as great a Regard to the Writings *of a* Prophet, *or an* Apoſtle, *as to* thoſe *of a* Wit, *or a* Philoſopher.

This Preface *being drawn into a much greater Length then I intended, I muſt omit ſome other particulars relating to the following Diſcourſes, and ſo without ſaying any more I leave them to the Judgment and Candour of the Reader.*

AN

AN INDEX OF THE PRINCIPAL POINTS Contained in these DISCOURSES.

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SERMON I.

Preached *Nov.* 7. 1728.

JOB XI. 7.

Canſt Thou by ſearching find out GOD? *Canſt thou find out the* Almighty *unto Perfection*?

THERE are two Different ſorts of People, who ſeem at a mighty Diſtance from each other, and yet approach very near in the Concluſion and Conſequence of their Doctrines: Theſe are the *Atheiſt*, and the *Deiſt*: The *Atheiſt*, that [a] *Fool, who hath ſaid in his Heart, there is no GOD*; and the *Deiſt*, that vain Undertaker, who preſumes to fathom the Almighty.

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a Pſal. XIV. 1. LIII. 1.

He that pretends to believe no God, and He that forms a God by his own Imagination are found in the Conclusion to believe alike as to the Relation, they bear to Him, and the Account, they must give of their Actions. And when the *Deist*'s Creed is examined, we shall find, he believes less of a God, and entertains less worthy Conceptions of Him, than those great and Virtuous Men among the Heathen, who were sensible of the Weakness and Depravity of Human Nature, who breathed and panted after Divine Knowledge, and extended their Views as far, as they could reach, to Heaven.

The *Deists* Creed is better known by what he denys, than by what he professeth, and, when all his Negative Articles are collected, we shall have a very slender Account of his Faith. He is willing perhaps to believe a Kind Propitious Being, whose Providence supports him, and whose Mercy will forgive him, if he should be answerable for his Actions; But he acknowledges no Dutys further, than the very Being of Society makes them necessary, nor indeed so far, when they interfere with his Pleasures; and believes no Rewards and Punishments in another Life, if he believes another Life at all, tho' the very Light of Nature gave Mankind very strong, and Vigorous Apprehensions of them.

We know what they deny, We would know what they do really profess. For *Deism* is founded in Infidelity, and springs from a Disbelief of all Revelation: The Light of Reason, and their Natural Religion are the two strong

Delu-

Deluſions, they pleaſe, and deceive themſelves with, and while they think their Reaſon clear enough to lead them into their Religion, they make Reaſon their Standard, and further, than it can carry them, excluſive of Revelation, they will not go, and if we conſider what their Religion realy is, we ſhall hardly grant, that their Reaſon or way of Reaſoning leads them into any Religion at all: It is one thing to conſider Reaſon in its Original Perfection, and another to conſider it as Corrupted and depraved, as weak and obſcured: In this ſtate of Things to make Reaſon the ſole Standard of Religion ſo, as to exclude Revelation, muſt produce a very weak and imperfect Scheme, and run them upon that fatal Rock of not Believing what they cannot comprehend, when Reaſon, even in its Original Perfection, cannot comprehend, what nevertheleſs it muſt acknowledge and believe.

This one Principle ſtrictly purſued overthroweth all Religion, as well Natural, as Revealed; For if we will believe Nothing, but what we have an adequate Knowledge, and Comprehenſion of, we can believe nothing of another World, nor ſo much as of our own Souls, nay we may queſtion the Evidence of our Senſes, when they preſent us with Objects, and every Object is ſuch, whoſe Natures and Eſſences we are not able to explain. Upon this Principle there can be no certain Aſſent. Nothing but Univerſal Scepticiſm muſt prevail.

With theſe Conſequences I am far from charging all thoſe, who deny the Doctrines of

our Faith in the ſenſe, we profeſs them; But if this Proceeding be unreaſonable in the *Deiſts*, Thoſe who pretend at leaſt to own a Divine Revelation, may conſider with themſelves, if they do not make Reaſon the ſole Meaſure and Standard of their Belief as much, as thoſe, who deny it, while they reject the plain Words, in which the Doctrines are revealed, and, becauſe they are not ſuitable to their Notions in the moſt obvious ſenſe, explain them in a ſenſe, they perſuade themſelves at leaſt, that they underſtand.

From hence it is, that Every one hath his own Scheme and Hypotheſis, and while they have differed from the Church, they have differed at the ſame time no leſs from one another,

From hence alſo it is, that in all Diſputes, wherewith the Enemys of *Chriſt* and his Religion have exerciſed the Church, which is called by his Name, we may obſerve a ſtrange Conformity of Principles, upon which the Adverſarys have proceeded, how different ſoever their ſeveral Hereſies and Opinions were.

In the Beginning of *Chriſtianity* its Enemys were either the *Heathen Philoſophers* and the *Jews* from without, or ſome of it's *Proſelytes*, either *Jews*, or *Heathen* from within: It is not my Purpoſe, nor is it any part of my preſent Buſineſs to enumerate the ſeveral Hereſys, which infeſted the Infant Church: Theſe are to be found in the Writings of the Apoſtles, and the Earlieſt Fathers: And how one Hereſie was deduced from another, and how to avoid

avoid one Extreme Conceited men ran into another may be likewise found in the Primitive *Fathers*, the first *Historians*, and the most ancient *Councils*: The *History* of the *Trinitarian Controversie* in Particular has been collected from those ancient Monuments with equal Learning and Fidelity, and afterwards carried thro' all Ages even down to the present Times: and to that excellent Treasure of Truth and Learning all those may be referred, who are curious to know, how these Points have stood, and how they have been defended.

My proper Business at this Time is to Defend the Doctrine of the *Trinity* in *Unity*: the true and proper *Divinity* of our Blessed Lord and Saviour: the Distinct *Personality* and *Absolute Divinity* of the Holy Ghost: These all or some Parts of them are the Province assigned me, but as the whole will not be contained in the Compass of these Discourses, and as the several Parts have been excellently treated and vindicated with great Exactness and unanswerable Learning, I shall address my self rather to a more general Defence of Revelation and the great Doctrines revealed, than undertake a special Defence of any one, or more of these Articles by themselves. These are in much Abler, and more Sufficient Hands, nor would I break into a Controversy, which the present Champions have so gloriously maintained.

I am sensible nevertheless, let me take which way I will, that it is difficult not to tread in the Steps of those, that have gone before me, and much more difficult to follow them with equal

Paces; But this Argument according to the Abilitys and Diligence of its Defenders ſhould be placed in every Point of Light, for its Truth will appear in all, and being handled according to the various manner and method of different Writers, it will be better ſuited to different Capacitys, and prove of more general Influence and Service in this Cauſe of Chriſt.

There is at this time a more preſſing Occaſion to treat the Argument in a more general way, to diſcover the Principles of Infidelity, and to lay them open to the World, to ſhow how the Poiſon ſpreads and diffuſeth it ſelf from one degree of Hereſie to another, how it [a] *eateth like Canker, overthrowing the Faith of ſome*, 'till at laſt thoſe miſerable Wretches, who are infected with it renounce their Baptiſm, and [b] *deny the Lord, that bought them.* The *Socinians* ſhould conſider this, who do expreſly deny, and the *Arians* more eſpecialy, if they are not aware of it, who do by Conſequence vacate the Satisfaction, Merits, and Mediation of Chriſt; and ſo by ſapping the Foundation they overthrow the Goſpel, and on its Ruins pave a direct Road to Infidelity.

But before I proceed, I would beg leave to premiſe ſome general Conſiderations of great Importance to the whole Controverſy in which we are engaged both with Infidels and Heretics, ſince there is a cloſe Connection between Hereſie and Infidelity, and the Arguments for

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a 2 Tim. II. 17, 18. *b* 2 Pet. II. 1.

both

both are reſolved at laſt into the ſame Common Principles.

By *Infidels* I do not mean either *Jews*, *Turks*, or *Pagans*, but thoſe, who live within the Pale of the Chriſtian Church, who paſs for Chriſtians in the groſs and common Denomination, and at the ſame time deny all revealed Religion: Theſe are they, who call themſelves *Deiſts*. By *Heretics* I do not mean all, who may fall under that Denomination, but particularly the *Unitarians*, whether they be conſidered as a diſtinct Sect by themſelves, or whether they may be comprized under the *Arian* or *Socinian* Scheme: For the *Arians* and *Socinians* are Both *Unitarians*, tho' upon different Suppoſitions.

As far, as the *Unitarians* acknowledge any Revelation, it would be injurious in that reſpect to rank them with the *Deiſts*: As far, as they hold a ſtrict perſonal *Unity* of the God-Head in oppoſition to the *Trinity*, they may ſeem to ſtand by themſelves: As far, as they deny the Divinity of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, they may be reckoned with the *Arians* and *Socinians*, and as far as the *Arians* and *Socinians* do hold a ſtrict and perſonal *Unity* of the God-Head, they may, without doing them any Wrong, be accounted *Unitarians*. The cloſe Connection between thoſe of theſe ſeveral Denominations is Evident to a Demonſtration, or rather ſo Evident, that it needs none; and how near the *Unitarians* are allied to the *Deiſts*, needs no long Proceſs to ſhow; if they think it worth their while, they may diſclaim

claim their Kindred; if not let them lay aside the Scriptures, and then their Schemes, how defective soever, will yet be much less embarrassed.

The utmost difference between the *Deists* and *them*, if there be any *Unitarians*, that are neither *Deists*, nor *Arians*, nor *Socinians*, for I go only on a favourable Supposition, however the utmost difference between the *Deists* and the *Arians*, and *Socinians* is this, that the *Deist* denies all Revelation, while the *Arian* and *Socinian* own a Revelation, and the Scriptures to be that Revelation, however they cavil and doubt and except to some parts of them, to those especially, which contain the Doctrines revealed, and for that Reason, because they contain them.

But to me there is little Difference between denying a Revelation, and denying the Doctrines revealed: The *Arian* will say indeed more, than the *Socinian* hath any Pretence to say, that he owns both the Revelation, and the Doctrine revealed. But when he explains it in a sense utterly subversive of the Words and Terms, in which it is revealed, and his Positions destroy the whole Frame and Oeconomy of the Gospel, it is much the same Thing as to deny it.

I shall not prosecute this Charge against them at present. To deny a Doctrine in express Terms, and to deny it by necessary Consequence is all one: Only the first is the more Open and Ingenuous way: The other more Insidious and Concealed. Thus the Modern

Arians

Arians speak of our Blessed Lord in the most exalted Terms, which, if they mean them in any proper signification, are Blasphemy, when applied to a Creature, but if they mean them, as doubtless they do, in a qualified sense, their Language is utterly inconsistent with their Meaning, and all these high Expressions are only a Veil and Disguise to hide from the World what they dare not openly avow, while they would seem to own the Divinity, they deny.

The great and Fundamental Principle, they all go upon, who deny Revelation, or the great Articles revealed, however varied in Expression, is much the same, and may at last be resolved into this, that what exceeds the Bounds of Human Understanding cannot be the Object of Faith; whereas with Respect to the Mysterious parts of Religion the Reverse is exactly True, and therefore in Consequence of this Principle, they either discard all Revelation, or else bring it down to a Level with their Capacitys.

To this Purpose sound these Positions of theirs. 1. That we may not be cramped and limited, and to show that our Ideas extend to what they do not extend, there is advanced by a most Eminent Writer this strange Assertion in Defiance and Contradiction to common Sense, and our own Conviction, that the [a] Idea, which belongs to Spirit is at least as clear, as the Idea, which belongs to Body.

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[a] Vol. I. B. II. Cap. XXIII. §. 5, 15, 22, 28.

2. Next to keep us within due Compass in the beginning of the third Chapter of the fourth Book he asserts, that we [a]can have Knowledge no further, than we have Ideas, and that our Knowledge doth not reach so far as our Ideas. For after having endeavoured to show, that our Knowledge extends not so far, as our Ideas, he makes this notable Inference, that therefore our Knowledge is Narrower, than our Ideas.

3. Thirdly, It is a Common Principle with these Men, that there is no coming at certain Knowledge without sensible Evidence, and strict Demonstration.

By a Dextrous Jingle of these plausible Sounds they amuse and impose upon the Understandings of Men, and mixing some Truth with manifold Falshood they tell us, That Mans Knowledge extends no further, than his Ideas, That all Assent is founded upon Knowledge: All Knowledge upon sensible Evidence and Demonstration: and so by ringing the Changes upon these false Maxims, False at least in the Application, they fall into a Necessity of rejecting Natural Religion as well as Revealed: For they cannot Believe what they cannot Know, and they cannot know what they cannot Comprehend.

This is the avowed and open way of Reasoning among some, and the necessary Consequential Reasoning of others. *Infidels* argue thus directly and are clamorous and importu-

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[a] Vol. II. B. IV. Chap. III. §. 1.

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nate for strict Evidence and Demonstration: All *Heretics* argue this way by Consequence, while they endeavour to explain and account for the great Mysterys of Faith in a manner, that takes away all Mystery, and for this very Reason, because as the Doctrines are delivered in the Scriptures, and professed in the Church, they cannot comprehend them.

I shall therefore in the remainder of this Discourse examine the Strength of these Principles, and lay open the Fallacy and Mischief of them.

1. The first Position is, that the Idea which belongs to Spirit is at least as clear as the Idea, which belongs to Body, insinuating, that if it be at least as clear it may possibly be clearer, and that we can discourse as clearly and Intelligibly of Spirit, as we can of Matter: or of what is Invisible, and subject to none of our Senses, as of what is Visible and subject to them all, and one Reason given, as the Question is varied, why we have as clear a Notion of the *Substance* of Spirit, as we have of Body, is this Wise one, because we have [a] no clear Idea of Substance whether Bodily or Spiritual at all. As if where we had no Idea of the Substance or Essences of the Things, our Ideas of the things themselves were equally clear; and then as we are equally ignorant of the Essence, we have no more Knowledge of one thing than another. This in Truth, is his Argument false in Supposition, and false in Fact so proved by

[a] B. II. Chap. XXIII. §. 5, 15, 16, 22, 25, 26, 30.

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the very Instances, he produces. As to the Substances indeed or the real Essence of things we have no proper adequate Idea, Our sharpest Senses cannot discern the Material, nor our strongest Imagination the Immaterial. Of things Immaterial we have properly no Ideas, but of Material we have Ideas so far, as their several Propertys and Qualitys are subject to our Senses.

1. But to answer more distinctly in the first place and to comply with his Use of the Word, The Idea he hath of Spirit is only the Idea, he hath of an Human Spirit, that it is a Thinking Substance, which supports our Intellectual Operations, as Bodily Substance is the support of Accidents. Whereas Thinking, Doubting, Knowing and a Power of Moving after our Manner do not necessarily belong to a Spirit as such, but to a Spirit in Conjunction with the Body, and the Operations of a Spirit in this Intimate Union with the Body must be very different from the Operation of a pure Spirit without such a Conjunction; and of a pure Spirit separate from the Body we have properly no Idea atall any further, than we can form a Notion, that It is an Immaterial and Immortal Being; but of its Operations we can form no proper Notion: They are something answerable to Thought and Reflection in us; But our Thoughts and Reflection work chiefly upon Material and Sensible Objects, and come to their Conclusions with much Labour and Pains, which cannot be supposed to be the Manner of Pure Spirits in their Operations.

2. Again

2. Again in the second place, We do appeal to our Senses and Experience for the Knowledge, we have of Body, and if we know not the inmost Substance or Substratum, as long as we know the Essential Propertys, we know enough for our Purpose. And tho' if we know, as in some measure we do, the Propertys of Spirit, yet if we have a more distinct perception of the Propertys of Body, the Idea we have of Spirit is not equaly clear with the Idea we have of Body: It is said we have as clear an Idea of Thinking as we have of Extension; and this may be true with reference to our own Thoughts, taking what he calls an Idea for the Consciousness, we have of them; Thinking in us is the Exercise of our Minds in Conjunction with our Bodies upon those Objects, we chuse to employ our Thoughts upon; but whether Thinking be Essential to a Spirit as such, is more, than we can determine. Thinking after our manner, which is all the Notion we can form, most certainly is not; and even in this Union of Soul and Body we cannot have any Idea of Thinking separated from the actual Thought it self: We have a Consciousness of it indeed, but no Idea, as we have of sensible Objects, where we have not the Objects themselves, but the Image only or Representation of them in the Mind.

3. In the third place this great Philosopher had surely altered his Opinion, and we may conclude that his Idea of Spirit was not so clear, as his Idea of Body, when in the

[a] third Chapter of his fourth Book he had laboured so hard to argue, that Matter might be capable of Thinking, and leaves it uncertain at last, whether the Soul be a Material, or Immaterial Substance.

2. The second Position is, [b] that we can have Knowledge no further, than we have Ideas, or that our Knowledge extends no further, than our Ideas: Which Maxim is False and Pernicious if strictly understood and applied, as *Infidels* apply it, to direct and proper Ideas. For tho' we can have no Knowledge without Ideas, yet we may extend our Knowledge beyond them: and this we actually do, when we apply the Ideas, we have to form some Conception of those things, whereof we have no Ideas; such are the Conceptions we form of Angels and Spirits, and of the Operations of those Intelligencys, when we conceive them something Correspondent and Analogous to our own Minds and their Operations.

We have no proper and immediate Idea of the World of Spirits, nor of our own Souls considered as separate from the Body; so far are we from having as clear an Idea of Spirit as of Body; and the same Author, who asserts that we have, asserts afterwards, [c] that the Existence of Spirits is not Knowable by us, in Consequence I suppose of the clearness of our Ideas; But how we can have as clear an Idea of Things, whose Existence is not Knowable, as we have

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a Book IV. Cap. III. §. 6, &c. Answer to the Bp of *Worcester*.
b See Book IV. Ch. III. §. 1. c B. IV. Ch. XI. §. 12.

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of Things, whoſe Exiſtence, we know, muſt be left to his Admirers to explain. His Inſtances of [a] Fairies and Centaurs are nothing to the Purpoſe, for we form Ideas of theſe from the Ideas that we have of Things, which do realy exiſt; and it is impoſſible for the Mind to form any Idea beyond the real Exiſtence of Things, for tho' a Centaur does not realy exiſt in the Compound Notion, yet as long, as the Mind can joyn the Ideas of a Man and an Horſe, and imagine a Creature reſulting from the Conjunction of theſe, the Notion is formed upon the real Exiſtence of Things: whereas, if Spirits do not exiſt, we can form no Notion of them at all from any thing elſe, that doth, except it be from our own Spirits; but in the firſt place, we can form no Idea of them from our own Spirits, as we can of Fairies, and Centaurs, becauſe theſe Ideas riſe from a Combination of things, whoſe Exiſtence we know by our Senſes. In the ſecond place, we can form no Idea of other Spirits from our own, but on a ſuppoſition that we had a true Idea of our own Spirits, and on a ſuppoſition, that other created Spirits are like ours, whereas we have no Idea of our own Spirits, as they realy are in their own Nature, but only a Conſciouſneſs of their Operations in this ſtate of Union with the Body, which can give us no Idea of Pure Spirits never joyned to ſuch Organs, as Ours.

But admitting, that the having Ideas of them doth not neceſſarily prove their Exiſtence, yet

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[a] Book IV. Ch. XI. §. 12.

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it does not follow that their Exiſtence is not Knowable: There is an Ambiguity and Fallacy in the Expreſſion, as if the Exiſtence of things were not Knowable, unleſs they were Evident to our Senſes, and actually before our Eyes; or as if what is not known one way cannot be known another, or as if what we know by Revelation, we do not know at all. And therefore he tells us, that for the [a] Exiſtence of Finite Spirits as well, as ſeveral other Things, we muſt content ourſelves with the Evidence of Faith, and a good Evidence it is: the only [b] *Evidence of Things not ſeen*, and this way ſurely we are as certain of the Exiſtence of other Spirits, as we are of the Exiſtence of Mens Spirits, after they have left the Body; So that if we cannot come at this Knowledge by the Deductions of Reaſon, we may come to it a ſurer way, and that is by Revelation, and ſo we believe the Exiſtence of Angels and Spirits: Yet tho' we are convinced of the Exiſtence, we cannot tell the Eſſence of Spirits, not even of our own, nor can we form any proper Ideas, having no Notion or Conception of them, but by ſuppoſing and ſupplying ſome Reſemblannce between our Spirits, and them, and this muſt be very imperfect, for we have no Conception of our own Spirits, but from their Operations, and thoſe Operations being in Conjunction with the Body muſt give us very diſtant and imperfect Notions of the Operations of unbodied Spirits: Of their real Eſ-

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[a] Book IV. Ch. XI. §. 12. [b] Hebr. XI. 1.

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ſence we can frame no Idea, nor is it knowable by us; yet of their Exiſtence we are aſſured, and our Knowledge in this, as in a thouſand Inſtances beſides, tho' originally founded in, is nevertheleſs extended beyond our Ideas, and I conclude we may have Knowledge of the Exiſtence of Things, where we can have no Idea of the Eſſence.

2. This Aſſertion cuts off all Hiſtorical Relations, and all Communication with another World: By this our Knowledge is confined to preſent and ſenſible Objects alone, nor can we be ſaid to know any thing, but what we have adequate Ideas of, nor the Exiſtence of any thing, but what is actually before our Eyes, or preſent to ſome of our Senſes, for all other Notions are raiſed from our Primary Ideas, and where the Ideas fail, our Knowledge alſo faileth.

1. The Conſequence of theſe Poſitions, when applied to the Things of another World, is, firſt, that either we have clear and adequate Ideas, and can diſcourſe of the Nature and Operations of pure Spirit as clearly, and Intelligibly, as we can of Body, and its Propertys, or we have not any Knowledge of Spirit, and its Operations, as Angel, or Spirit ſubſiſts and operates independent of Body, or any material Organs, and when it appears, that we are ſo far from having as clear an Idea of Spirit, as we have of Body, that we have properly no Idea of it at all, then becauſe our Knowledge reaches no further than our Ideas, we have no Knowledge of Spirits at all.

2. If we applie this Reaſoning to the Eſſence and Attributes of God and the great Articles of Religion, we ſhall find, that it deſtroys all Religion *Natural* as well as *Revealed*: For of God we can form no proper Idea, and our Conceptions of Him are formed by transferring the moſt excellent Ideas we have of Created Nature, and the Notions we have of Spirit from the Operations of our own Minds, to expreſs very imperfectly his moſt Tranſcendent and Incomprehenſible Nature.

It is true, we can have no Knowledge without Ideas, but we can, as I ſhall fully prove hereafter, extend our Knowledge beyond them, by applying thoſe Ideas, we have, to expreſs and repreſent thoſe things to our Minds, of which we can have no proper Ideas, as they are in themſelves.

It is ſaid, [a] That we do not know the Eſſence of God not knowing the Real Eſſence of a Pebble, of a Fly, or of our own ſelves; as if becauſe we are ignorant of our own Eſſence, and of the Eſſence of Things Animate and Inanimate, we are therefore for that reaſon ignorant of the Eſſence of God. Suppoſe, we knew our own Eſſence, will it follow, that we could know our Creators? And have we in any Reſpect ſo much Knowledge of the Eſſence of God, as we have of an Inſect or a Stone? We have adequate Ideas of their Eſſential Propertys, and ſo far of their Eſſence; but we have no adequate Idea of God, and yet ſurely we

[a] Book II. Chap. XXIII. §. 35.

may

may have a sufficient Knowledge of Him, tho' He doth infinitely transcend our Ideas.

3. When Men do confine their Knowledge to their Ideas of things, as they are in themselves, they do necessarily argue from Material Beings, and Humane Relations to Spiritual and Divine in a Strict Literal Propriety, and so conceive of the Divine Nature, as of themselves; or else if they leave the Strict Literal Application as too gross and Offensive, they run the Divine Revelations mentioned in the Scriptures into meer Figure, Metaphor, and Allusion; One way they fall into *Tritheism*, if they hold the proper Divinity of the Persons: the other way into *Sabellianism* if they allow these Relations to be only Figurative; but if they allow the Reality of the *Persons*, and deny the Divinity of the *Second* and the *Third*, they must be either *Arians* or *Socinians*.

This is the Effect of Confining Knowledge to their Adequate Ideas, and applying those Ideas in a strict and proper Sense, or else in meer Figue and Allusion to that Transcendent Being, who in his Nature and Essence and Manner of Subsisting is the Adorable Object of our Faith so far, as he hath been pleased to reveal Himself, but still, notwithstanding the Revelation, nevertheless above our Comprehension.

3. Thirdly, It is a Common Principle with these Men, in their Opposition to Faith, that all certain Knowledge depends upon sensible Evidence and strict Demonstration, or as they commonly express it negatively, that there is

no coming to certain Knowledge any other way.

This will require a more distinct Consideration, especially as to sensible Evidence, since by this Position all *derivative*, and *Traditionary* Evidence is denied, and the Authority of *that great Author*, I have mentioned, is made use of to take off all Credit from the Testimony, on which our Religion depends.

I shall consider therefore this Point of sensible Evidence separately, and that of sensible Evidence and Demonstration together. And first for sensible Evidence alone.

1. All Evidence is either *immediate* or *derived*. The *immediate* relates to what we hear with our Ears, and see with our Eyes: The *derived* is what is delivered and reported by others: since therefore we were not Eye Witnesses of those Things, which we most assuredly do believe, all the Evidence we can have of them, and of whatever was formerly *transacted*, *written* or *done*, must be from *Testimony*, that is from *Tradition* either *Oral* or *Written*. *Oral* is indeed subject to manifold Variations, and Uncertaintys, and therefore when *Oral* failed it pleased God to continue his Truth and to declare his Will by a *Written Tradition*. The Scriptures are the Conveyers of this *Tradition*, and so far our *Religion* may be called a *Traditional Religion*; But then as Laws once committed to Writing, and faithfully preserved, as sacred Muniments, in the Archives, and Repositorys of any Kingdom, are for ever *Authentic*, and *True*, and as such delivered down from

from one Age to another, in like manner the *Holy Oracles* having ever ſubſiſted, and been preſerved thro' all Ages, ſince they were reſpectively Written, have at leaſt the ſame Authority with *Civil Records*: and thus they are the Proof and Evidence of our Religion, into which all Collateral Proofs are to be reſolved. That the Scripture contains the Religion, and the Faith, we contend for, we are able to prove; That thoſe Books, which we receive for ſuch, are the Real Scripture, that is Writings inſpired by God we have among other Arguments a moſt aſſured Teſtimony, ſuch a Teſtimony, as grows ſurer by Age, and draws Strength from the Oppoſition it meets with, and hath ever met with in the World.

This I aſſert in oppoſition to what is ſo triumphantly ſuggeſted from the Celebrated Author of the *Eſſay*, [a] *that Traditional Teſtimonys, the further they are removed from their Original, are the Weaker Proofs.* And this is illuſtrated by a Rule obſerved in the Law of our Country, which is, that *tho' the atteſted Copy of a Record be a good Proof, yet the Copy of a Copy never ſo well atteſted, and by never ſo credible Witneſſes will not be admitted as a Proof in Judicature.* Whence he infers, That any *Teſtimony, the farther off it is from the Original Truth, the leſs Force and Proof it hath,* (which is true ſuppoſing it to have deviated more and more from the Original Truth, otherwiſe the Expreſſion is fallacious) and he goes on to explain his Aſſertion, and argues

a Book IV. Ch. XVI. §. 10. See Ch. XVIII. §. 4.

in Inſtances of *Hearſay* or *Report* at ſecond or third Hand, whence he again infers, *That in Traditional Truths each Remove weakens the Force of the Proof.*

Whether the Author intended to apply this to the Scriptures, and to the Proof and Evidence for the Chriſtian Religion I cannot ſay: I hope he intended no more, than to expoſe the *Popiſh Traditions*, and *Old Wives Storys*. But it is certain, that our *Infidels* plume themſelves upon this Paſſage, and apply it directly to the *Scriptures*, and the Proofs, and Evidences of our Faith.

1. But I anſwer firſt. That what is true of *Oral Tradition* or Reports by Hearſay is not to be applied to *Written Tradition*, and if the Author intended to weaken the Force of *Written Evidence*, as it ſhould ſeem, he did, by the Inſtance he brings, then I ſay, that the Law of the Land is improperly urged; and the Diſalowing the *Copy* of a *Copy* of an *atteſted Record* does not come up to the Point before us.

The Reaſon, why ſuch a *Copy* is not admitted for Proof in Courts of *Judicature*, is not becauſe the *Copy* of a *Copy* never ſo well atteſted by never ſo credible Witneſſes is of *no Credit*; but the Reaſon, why a *Copy* of a *Copy* is diſalowed is this; becauſe we can always have an *atteſted Copy* from the *Record* it ſelf, and to admit of any other is ſubject to many Inconveniencys conſidering the Corruption of Human Nature, and the ſtrong Influences Men are under to ſupport and make good a diſputed Title. But what is this to the *Scripture*? If the preſent Co-

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pys be more than once removed, shall they be no Evidence at all? And what *Parallel* can be drawn between *Public Writings* of an *Universal* Concern published and Communicated to the whole World, and *Writings* relating to *Private* Property: the Proceedings of *Civil Judicatures*, and the *Forms of Law*? The Scriptures are committed as a Sacred *Depositum* to the Keeping of the Church in all Parts of the Christian World: Their being Published in all Languages, Cited by all Writers, appealed to in all Controversys, from the Beginning of Christianity to this Day, are so many Proofs of their Authority; and however Readings and Translations may differ in other Respects, they all conspire in One Doctrine with respect to the great Articles of Faith: Those, that differ in the Interpretation, agree however in the *Text*, nor till of late have the Enemys of Christianity presumed to *alter* the confessed Readings of the *Text* it self.

The Challenges made by all sides to the Scriptures: The Enemys, that have attacked them, and the Defences made to repel those attacks, are so many Testimonys of their Authority, and as they are *Open Records* not *locked* up, like *Court Rolls*, and *Evidences*, but freely published in all Languages, and by that means preserved in all Christian Countrys, they lose nothing of their Original Authority, but run down in a constant Stream thro' all Ages, till, like Rivers, that fall into the Sea, they shall at last be swallowed up in Eternity.

2. My

2. My second Answer is, The *Maxim* here laid down, that *in Traditional Truth each Remove weakens the Force of the Proof* is *False*, and only holds where a *Variation* can be proved in the *Course* of the *Tradition* whether *Oral* or *Written*. But where the *Tradition* is *uniform* especially in *written Tradition* there every *Remove* is so far from *Weakening*, that it *Strengthens* the *Proof* of such *Traditional Truth*. Otherwise what was True in former Ages cannot be received by us, and all Historical Truth falls to the Ground at once: But what *this Author* gives to [a] *Historical Faith* is sufficient to destroy the Position, he advances. That there was such a Person, as *Julius Cæsar*, that he *subverted* the *Libertys* of his *Country*, and was *slain* in the *Senate House* are Facts which have descended to us without all Doubt thro' the Hands of several Writers, and we are not less certain at this Distance than the World was above a thousand Years ago of these *Traditionary Truths*: We have indeed the Concurrence of all Preceeding Ages up to his Time to confirm them: But suppose any of the *Decads* of *Livy*, which are lost, should be found, and there we should meet with a Piece of History not recorded by other Historians, and afterwards some other Writer should be discovered, who voucheth the same from *Livy* as an *Original Record*, I suppose that neither the *Copy* from *it* nor the *Original Record* it self, howsoever *True* they *might* be, could appear so *evidently True* to us, as the *History* of *Julius Cæsar*

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a Book IV. Ch. XVII. §. 8.

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delivered down by so many Writers throughout so many Ages. The *Evidence* of *Facts* consists not only in the *Goodness* but the *Continuance* of the *Testimony*, and the *Failure* is in *not being able to run up the Traditionary Truth, as high as its Original.*

What I have observed of *Historical Facts* in *General* concludes more strongly for the Truth of our *Religion* in *Particular*: as the more any Evidence hath been weighed and examined, the more certain and Satisfactory it is. And therefore where Facts have been disputed, and the Doctrines of Religion have been Controverted by the Enemys of it, as it ever was, and is the Case of the Christian Religion, the Opposition and Defences still strengthen the Proof thro' all Ages, and in all Nations, especially if the Testimony of Persecutions and Sufferings be added: the more Notorious the Facts: the more canvassed in all Ages and Nations, the stronger still is the Evidence.

2. In the next place let us consider this Principle that there is no coming to certain Knowledge without sensible Evidence, and strict Demonstration as they are joyned together.

But here again, as is the Use of *Sophistical Disputers*, they play with a Word and abuse the World, taking Knowledge in no proper determinate Sense, as if there was no difference between *Faith* and *Science*, between *Knowing* and *Believing*: whereas in the Question before us *Knowledge* is distinguished from *Faith*, tho' it be not opposed unto it. The *Oppositions* to *Faith* are from [a] *Science falsely so called.*

[a] 1 Tim. VI. 20.

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The *Author* of the *Eſſay* hath diſtinguiſhed between [a] *Faith* and *Knowledge*, and endeavoured to fix the [b] *Boundarys* of *Faith* and *Reaſon*: He hath admirably deſcribed [c] the *Weakneſs* of our *Intellectual* Powers, and in the cleareſt Terms requires our Submiſſion to the [d] *Revelation* of God. He hath expreſſed his Sentiments in ſome parts of his Works, as becomes a *Believer*, and what He writes as a *Chriſtian* is a full Anſwer to what he hath advanced as a *Philoſopher*. According to Him we muſt preſerve the Diſtinction between *Faith* and *Knowledge*, between *Reaſon* and *Revelation*. *Faith* indeed is founded in *Knowledge*, but its Eſſential Diſtinction from it is the believing ſomething we do not know to be as it is aſſerted, for the ſake of what we do know; and ſo we believe what God reveals, upon the Knowledge, we have, that it is his Revelation. But I anſwer more particularly.

1. That Objects of *Faith*, as ſuch, are not capable of *ſenſible Evidence*, and ſtrict *Demonſtration*: *Faith* is properly built, tho' on a *Divine Aſſurance*, yet in the laſt reſolve on *Moral Evidence*, For ſo the *Divine Aſſurance* it ſelf is eſtabliſhed; and tho' ſome Men may talk very Familiarly of *Demonſtration* in Matters of Religion, and treat ſome great *Articles* of *Faith* in the way and form of *Demonſtration*, yet all this Oſtentation when examined to the Bottom is no more, than *Moral Evidence*. *Faith* may be

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a Book IV. Chap. XV. §. 3, &c. *b* Chap. XVIII. *c* Vol. I. Book II. Ch. XXIII. §. 12. *d* Book IV. Ch. XVI. §. 14. Chap. XVIII. §. 9.

built

built on *Facts*, of which Mankind hath had *Senſible Evidence*, and the Being of God Himſelf may be proved from ſeveral Inſtances already demonſtrated, but the Inferences, that theſe are good Proofs, that therefore there is a Divine Being, that *Chriſt* is the Son of God, and ſo on, theſe are the work of Reaſon, by which we arrive at a *Moral* Certainty, and tho' we build remotely upon *Senſitive Evidence* and *Demonſtration*, yet the Deductions, we make from them, are not capable of the ſame *Demonſtration*; Thus *Aſtronomical Demonſtrations* may be applied as *Mediums* to prove the Being of a God, but it is the Heavens, and not God, which is the Subject of them. So when Miracles are firſt proved by *Senſible Evidence*, the Proof to us is like that of other Facts, we are not Eye Witneſſes of, by *Moral Evidence* only.

This *Demonſtration* is pretended in every thing almoſt, and if they will call their *Form* of Argument by the Name of *Demonſtration*, to whatever Subject it is applied, then I do inſiſt, that theſe Perſons muſt allow, what they call *Demonſtration* in *Morality* or *Metaphyſics*, or any other *Science*, is as ſtrictly and neceſſarily *Concluſive*, as proper *Mathematical* Concluſions are, or elſe, that this is not truly *Demonſtration*, nor are the Subjects capable of it; If they ſay, that one amounts to the ſame Evidence with the other, then they acknowledge, that *Moral Certainty* is equal to *Mathematical Demonſtration*. I conclude in their own way, that where they can have no *Senſible Evidence*, they can have no *Demonſtration*. And if we muſt believe upon *Senſible*

ſible Evidence only, we can believe Nothing on the *Teſtimony* and *Relation* of others; but I hope we may be obliged to believe what is not Capable of *Senſible Evidence* or of *Demonſtrative Proof.*

And therefore I anſwer ſecondly,

2. That *Senſible Evidence* and *Demonſtration* are Inconſiſtent with *Faith*, as *Faith* is diſtinguiſhed from *Knowledge.* Such a *Certainty*, as riſes from *Senſible Evidence* and *Demonſtration* compels the *Aſſent*, and we are not at Liberty to withold it without giving ourſelves the Lie, and acting againſt our ſtrongeſt Convictions: *The ſenſible Evidence* from *Without*, and the *Inward* Perception of the Mind together with our Conſciouſneſs of its Operations, are the Higheſt Degree of *Knowledge*, and a ſort of *Intuition*, which admits no Reaſoning as it needs none, to come at its Concluſions: And *Demonſtration* properly ſo called, tho' it proceeds by certain *Mediums*, and is carried on in a Chain to its Concluſions, produces an Equal Certainty, and we are ſaid to know, and not to believe what we ſee with our Eyes, perceive in our Minds, and is proved to our Underſtanding by undeniable *Demonſtration*: It is therefore highly Incongruous and Abſurd in theſe Men to require ſuch *Evidence* in *Articles* of *Faith*, as will make it impoſſible for us to believe, and thoſe, who will not aſſent, except where the *Aſſent* is inevitably *forced*, and muſt *neceſſarily follow*, notwithſtanding any perverſe Affectation, or Oppoſition of the Will, thoſe Perſons can never believe at all.

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I anſwer thirdly, and what I ſhall now offer, may ſerve for a Concluſion and Application of this preſent Diſcourſe,

3. That as *Faith* is a *Chriſtian Grace*, and on our part the Neceſſary Condition of our Juſtification, this Demand of *Senſible Evidence* and *Demonſtration* utterly deſtroys it: *Faith* with Reſpect to Religious Articles is an Affiance and Truſt in God: a Recognition of his Veracity, Goodneſs, and Power, and when we underſtand what God hath ſaid, we believe it, whether it be an Aſſertion, that a Thing is ſo, or any Promiſe, that it ſhall be ſo. Thus we believe that in the *Divine Eſſence* there are *Three Perſons* of *Equal Majeſty*, *Power*, and *Eternity*: The *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, as revealed, and aſſerted in Fact: and thus we believe a *Judgment to come*, becauſe *God* [a] *hath appointed a Day in which he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs*. Every Point of ſtrict Revelation is an Article of this Nature, and when we underſtand the Terms of the Propoſition, we do believe, tho' we know not the Manner, nor are able to comprehend, *how theſe things can be*: In *ſenſible Evidence* and *Demonſtration* there is properly no Concurrence of the Will: We do neceſſarily aſſent: in *Articles of Faith*, the Concurrence of the Will is required. For *Faith* is grounded upon *Moral Evidence*, on the *Authority*, *Teſtimony*, and *Veracity* of *God* Himſelf delivered to us by the Hands of *Men*, and there is this Eſſential Difference between *Moral Certainty*, and *Senſible Evidence*, between

[a] Acts XVII. 31.

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Moral Certainty, and *Demonstration*, that in the *Latter* the Concurrence of the *Will* is *Forced*, in the *Former* it is *Free*: In the *Latter* it is no Virtue to believe what we do strictly know: in the *Former Faith is imputed to us for Righteousness*, because the *Will* submits, notwithstanding any apparent Difficulty: As in our Actions so in our Belief we are accountable: To deny our Assent, where the Evidence is sufficient, that is, as great as the Nature of thing will admit of, is to act unreasonably: It argues a Wicked Byas and Corruption in the *Will*, and is the great Spring, from which all these Bitter Streams of Heresie and Infidelitie do flow. There is a difference, but not so great perhaps, as is imagined, between *not believing at all*, and *not believing aright*; but strictly and properly speaking, He, that believes in his own sense contrary to the received determined sense of the Church in all Ages, doth not believe the Article proposed any more, than an *Infidel* who professeth not to believe at all.

To conclude therefore, Let us look into our own Hearts, and [a] *examine our selves, whether we be in the Faith*; Let us [b] *take heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of us an Evil Heart of Unbelief in departing from the Living God*: For *Unbelief* doth Verily grow out of an *Evil Heart*, whether it be tainted with gross Impuritys and external Vices, or whether it be infected with the Inward Corruption of Pride, Conceitedness and Singularity. Let us therefore [c] *cleanse our selves*

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a 2 Cor. XIII. 5. *b* Hebr. III. 12. *c* 2 Cor. VII. 1.

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from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, beseeching God [a] *the Father of Lights, from whom every Good and Perfect Gift descendeth*, that he would give us his Holy Spirit, that He would make us [b] *clean Hearts, and renew a right Spirit within us* thro' *Jesus Christ* his Eternal, His only Begotten Son, our most merciful Redeemer: our most Blessed Lord and Saviour: our Mediator and Advocate, *who ever liveth to make Intercession for us*: Thro' Him we have an *Access by one Spirit unto the Father*: And therefore unto this Sacred and Undivided *Trinity, Three Persons*, and *One Eternal God*, The *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost* be ascribed, as is most due, in all Churches of the Saints All Honour and Glory, Might, Majesty and Dominion for Ever and Ever. *Amen.*

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a Jam. I. 17. *b* Psal. LI. 10.

SER-

SERMON II.

Preached *Dec.* 5. 1728.

JOB XI. 7.

Canſt Thou by ſearching find out GOD? *Canſt thou find out the* Almighty *unto Perfection*?

IN my laſt Diſcourſe I thought it neceſſary to enumerate the ſeveral *Enemys* of our *Faith*, who live within the *Pale* of the *Chriſtian Church*, ſuch as *Deiſts*, *Unitarians*, *Arians*, and *Socinians*, as they are *diſtinguiſhed* from each other, and as they *agree* in ſome Common Principles: as they deny *Revelation* in general, or the *Doctrines revealed* in particular; For the *Deiſt*, who denys all *Revelation*, doth in this Controverſy deny no more, than the *Arian*, and *Socinian*, who

deny the *Doctrines revealed*, or put such a Construction on them, as amounts to a Denial: He that affirms the *Son* of *GOD* to be a *Creature*, or that denys his *Eternal Essence* and *Subsistence* with the *Father*, denys the *Doctrine revealed*, whether he supposes the *Son* to have *existed* in any *indefinite* Point of Time, with the *Arians*, or whether he supposes *Him* to have had *no Existence before* his *Incarnation*, and *Birth*, with the *Socinians*.

These do all proceed upon one and the same Fundamental Principle: The *Deist* rejects all *Revelation*, because he cannot explain the *Doctrines revealed*: The *Arians* and *Socinians* receive a *Revelation*, because they think, they can explain it: The *Deist* resteth upon his *Light* of *Nature* for his *Religion*: The *Arian* and *Socinian* depend upon the *Strength* of their *Reason* for *Theirs*: Each forms his *Creed* upon his own *Hypothesis*, and rather than admit a *Revelation*, or the *Doctrines revealed* in a *sense* contrary to *their own*, they either deny, or overturn the whole *Gospel* of *Christ*.

To oppose the Perverseness and Errors of these Men, and to lay the Ax to the Root of this Evil, I thought it necessary to enter into a previous Examination of some of their Common Principles, and to shew the Falseness, and Mischief of them; For tho' there is a *Difference* between *Heresy*, and *Infidelity*, as between *no Belief*, and a *wrong Belief*, yet the *Heretic* believes the *Doctrines revealed*, as they are revealed, no more, than an *Infidel* who doth not believe them at all; For it is *all one* in Common Con-

Construction, *not to believe at all*, and *to hold a Contradictory Proposition to the Article proposed.*

The *Ground* of their *Misbelief*, and *Unbelief* is also the *same*: They will believe Nothing, that is *above* their *Comprehension*, nor submit to any *Doctrines*, which they cannot in all Points *explain*: For tho' the *Arians* especially talk much of *Ineffable* and *Incomprehensible*, yet they endeavour to *explain* this *Incomprehensible* and to *utter* this *Ineffable*.

I have therefore pursuant to my first Design considered three remarkable *Principles*, which these People do either *expressly* or by *Consequence* proceed upon.

Two of them are false Positions laid down by the Celebrated Author of *Humane Understanding*. The first of which is,

1. That we have as clear an *Idea* of *Spirit*, as we have of *Body*, and of *Thinking*, as we have of *Extension* and *Cohesion* of *Parts*. This *Position* I have considered at large, and shall only add, that as he defines *Spirit* to be a *Thinking Substance*, and expresses his *Idea* of *Spirit* by his *Idea* of *Thinking*, this shows, that we have not, nor can have any proper *Idea* of *Spirit* at all; but all, we do, is by way of *Analogy* from a Consciousness of our Intellectual Operations to form some improper Conception of it, for a *Spirit*, as such, doth not *think* after our manner, and if it did *think*, as our *Spirits* do, still we can form no *Idea* of *Thinking*, nor any *Representation* of it *separate* from our *Thoughts* themselves. For properly speaking we can have an *Idea* of *Nothing* but what is both *Sensible* and *External* to us.

2. His second *Position* is, That we can have *Knowledge* no further, than we can have *Ideas*, or that our *Knowledge* extends not beyond our *Ideas*: This, however meant by *himself*, is understood of *proper* and *direct Ideas*, and so applied in the Cause of *Heresy* and *Infidelity*; And thus by *Confining* their *Knowledge* to their *Ideas*, these Men argue from *Material Beings* to *Spiritual*, and from *Human Relations* to Divine, in a strict *Literal* Propriety, or else they turn the great *Mysterys* of *Faith* into mere *Figure* and *Allusion*: This last runs them into *Sabellianism* with respect to the *Ever Blessed TRINITY*: the other into *Tritheism*, if they *admit*, or into either *Arianism*, or *Socinianism* if they *deny* the *Second* and *Third Persons* to be as truly *Divine* as the *First*.

3. The third *Principle*, which they proceed upon is, that *there is no coming at certain Knowledge without sensible Evidence, and Demonstration.* This *Position*, as well as the *two others*, is destructive of all Religion, and confines our *Knowledge* most strictly to *proper* and *direct Ideas*.

1. But first, The Things of another World and many Instances in this are not capable of *sensible Evidence and Demonstration*: The former Demand destroys all *Historical* Truth, and all *Testimony Human* and *Divine*: the other is a Demand impossible, *strict Demonstration* being confined to *Dimensions*, *Numbers* and *Figures*, and their Proportions.

2. Secondly these Demands destroy all *Faith*, as contradistinguish'd to *Knowledge*.

3. They

3. They deſtroy our *Faith*, as *Faith* is a *Chriſtian Grace*, and on our parts a *neceſſary Condition* of our *Juſtification*.

Thus do theſe Men endeavour to bring every Thing within the Reach of their Capacitys: They *extend* their *Ideas* beyond their Limits, as in the *firſt Inſtance*, and they *reſtrain* their *Knowledge* within the Compaſs of their *Ideas*, as in the *Second*: They inſiſt upon *ſenſible Evidence*, where it is *not* to be *had*, and require *Demonſtration* in *Points not capable* of it.

All Arguments againſt the *Being* of a *GOD* in general, as diſcoverable by the *Light* of *Nature*, and againſt the *Revelation* of *Himſelf* in particular, as delivered in the *Scriptures*, are raiſed upon this *Foundation*: For if Men will *believe* no further than they *know*, which is indeed *not* to *believe*, and they can *know* no further, than they have *Ideas*, *ſenſible Evidence*, and *Demonſtration*, that is, if they will *believe* no further, than they can *account for* and *demonſtrate* to their *own Reaſon* the *Way* and *Manner* of what is *Incomprehenſible*, then I ſay, the *Deiſt* can believe a *God* no more, than *He* can believe the great *Myſterys* of our *Faith*, and *Heretics* who believe them no further, than they *imagine* at leaſt, they can *explain* them, fall into the ſame Conſequences, and if they are true to their Principles, cannot believe at all.

Their whole Conduct is Inconſiſtent with the *Belief* of an *Incomprehenſible Being*, and with the *ſuppoſition* of a *Revelation* from *Him* in the great *Articles revealed*: For while they endeavour to *explain*, they do in Effect *deny* the *Revela-*

tion, and give *their own ſenſe*, inſtead of *GOD's Declaration*, to the World.

I have thought it neceſſary therefore to obviate this *Fundamental Error*, and to remove this *Stumbling Block* out of the way, before I proceed to any of the great Points of *Revelation*; and to this end I have choſen the Queſtion, which *Zophar* here propoſes to *JOB*. *Canſt thou by ſearching find out GOD? Canſt thou find out the Almighty unto Perfection?*

Which Words in this way of *Interrogation* do more *ſtrongly* import the *Negative*, and, as it is evident from the *Context*, they are to be underſtood of a *full* and *complete Knowledge* of *GOD*, as *He* is in *Himſelf*: in his *Nature* and *Eſſence*, together with the *Knowledge* of his *Attributes*, and *particularly* of his *Wiſdom*, that his *Wiſdom* is *Unſearchable*, as *Himſelf* is *Incomprehenſible*: *It is High as Heaven, what canſt thou do? Deeper than Hell, what canſt thou know?*

The Text therefore, where according to the *Eaſtern Idiom*, the *laſt* Clauſe is *Exegetical* and *Enforcive* of the *firſt*, limits the *Powers* and *Facultys* of our *Souls*, ſets Bounds to our Enquirys, and acquaints us, that there is a *BEING* tranſcendently above our Comprehenſion.

That we have a *Knowledge* of this *BEING* is *ſuppoſed.*

That we can Know Him unto *Perfection* is *denyed.*

It may be proper therefore with reſpect to the firſt to conſider,

I. The *Strength* aud *Compaſs* of our *Natural Powers*,

Powers, how far they will carry us in our *Knowledge* of *GOD*.

II. With Reference to the other, That they will not carry us unto *Perfection*, or that by our *Natural Powers* we cannot arrive at a full and *adequate Knowledge* of the *Almighty*.

I. First then we may consider the *Strength* and *Compass* of our *Natural Powers*, how far they will carry us in the *Knowledge* of *GOD*.

In Order to this I would propose in the first place,

1. To enquire into and fix *What* that is, which is commonly called the *Light of Nature*.

2. In the second *What Account* the *Scripture* gives us of *it*.

3. And in the third place to *conclude* this Discourse with some proper *Observations* and *Inferences* from these *two Enquirys*.

1. First for the *Light* of *Nature* in the *Common* received *Notion*. This I take to be the *Reason of Mankind*: that *Faculty* of *Discoursing* and *Understanding*, whereby we *discern* and *assent* to what is *Right* and *True*, and *discover* what is *False* and *Wrong*.

This *Faculty* of *Reason* and *Understanding* proceeds in a *limited* and *certain method*: The *Mind* of *Man* is *Uniform* in its *Operations*, and works after the *same* manner upon the *same* Materials in a *Stated* Progress from his *first Perception* and *Apprehension* of Things to the *last Conclusion*.

For there is one general *Ground Plott*, one *Common Foundation* of *Knowledge*, and *those* are our *Ideas*, by *which* I mean Those *Figures* and

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Impreſſions, which remain upon the *Imagination* from our *firſt Perception* and *Apprehenſion* of *Things*: Theſe *Figures* being *received* by the *Senſes*, and *diſcerned* by the *Mind*, are a *full* and *entire Repreſentation* of the *Things* they *ſtand for*, as to their *outward Appearance*: As of a *Man*, or an *Army*, an *Houſe* or a *City*: Theſe I call, however they are made up of *Parts*, as all *Integrals* are, *each* of *them one Simple and entire Idea.* Upon *theſe* the *Mind* employs *it ſelf*: *It unites*, *compounds*, *compares*, *diſtinguiſheth*, *ſeparates* and *divides* the *Ideas*, *it* is furniſhed with, as *they* have, or as they *ſeem* to have an *Agreement* or *Diſagreement* with *each other.*

The whole *Stock* of our *Ideas* is *generally*, but in the Judgment of a *moſt learned Writer* on this Argument, very *improperly* divided into *thoſe* of *Senſation*, and *thoſe* of *Reflection*, as they are *aſſorted* by the *great Patron* of that *Diſtinction.* But our *Thoughts* and *Reflection* are not *Ideas*: They are only the *Notions* and *Conceptions*, we *form* upon *them.* *Reflection* is originally founded *in*, and riſes *from* our *Ideas* of *Senſation*: *It* is the *Act* or *Operation* of the *Mind* upon *them*, and to call thoſe *Thoughts*, which riſe from *Reflection*, *Ideas*, is to confound the *Operation* of our *Minds*, and make that an *Idea*, which is only the *Reſult* and *Determination* of the *Mind* upon *whatever* is the *Subject* of its *Thoughts* and *Reflections.* The Reſult and Determination of our *Thoughts* and *Reflection* are various according to the *Subjects* they are employed upon whether *Speculative* or *Practical*: In *Speculative* Subjects when we have fixed a *Notion*

tion we are apt to call it an *Idea*, as of *GOD* and his *Attributes* for Instance; but whether *that* be an *Idea*, or *those* be *Ideas* which at *best* are so *imperfect* a *Representation* of an *Incomprehensible*, as well as an *Invisible Being*, is *no Question* with those, who make *Ideas* stand for the very *Pictures* and *Impressions* of the *Objects themselves*: In *Practical Subjects* no Body will take our Determination to *act* or *not to act* for an *Idea*: no more than in *Argumentation*, which may partake of *both*, we will call the *Conclusion* from the *Premises* an *Idea*. We have in Reality no *Ideas* whether *Simple* or *Compound*, but from *Sensation*, and when we *make* a *Compound Idea*, it is still *resolveable* into so many *Simple Ideas*. For properly we have no *Ideas*, but of things *without*, which are *subject* to our *Senses*, and these are *seen* or apprehended in the *Imagination*, as is the *Likeness* of any thing *reflected* in a *Glass*: The *Object* it self is *not* in the *Mirror*, but only the *Image* and *Resemblance* of it, and it is therefore absurd to say, that we have an *Idea* of what is *Actually* in the *Mind*; for *Ideas* are not the *Objects* themselves, but only the *representations* of them *transmitted* to the *Mind* thro' the *Senses*.

However if by *Ideas* we understand every *Notion* and *Conception* of the *Mind*, whether *they* arise from *outward Impressions* or *inward Considerations*, we only *enlarge* the *Term*, and those *Ideas*, which rise from the *inward Operation* of the *Mind*, are *originally* founded in *those*, which are formed upon our *sensible* Apprehension of *outward Objects*. These *last* therefore properly speaking are the *only Simple Ideas*; for if there be

be any *Ideas* of *Reflection*, yet they cannot be *Simple Ideas*, becauſe they are of a *Secondary Growth*, and formed *not* by a *Simple*, but a *Reflex Act* of the *Mind*, and therefore, tho' we ſhould *admit* that there are *Ideas* of *Reflection*, we may nevertheleſs moſt juſtly *deny*, that there are any *Simple Ideas* of *Reflection*. For *Perception*, which is reckoned the *firſt Simple Idea* of *Reflection*, includes in it at leaſt the *Act* of *Simple Apprehenſion*, and the *thing* ſo *apprehended*, but properly ſpeaking the *Act* of *Perception* is *antecedent* even to our moſt *Simple Ideas*, and till the *Mind perceives*, *it* is not *poſſeſſed* of its *Ideas*: *Perception* therefore is the *Actual Formation* of the *Idea* rather, than an *Idea* it ſelf; and when we would explain to others, or repreſent to ourſelves what *Perception* is, we repreſent it to be a *Feeling* or *Conſciouſneſs* of the *Impreſſion* made on the *Mind* by *Senſible Objects*; but *this* cannot in any Propriety be called a *Simple Idea*, or indeed *any Idea* at all: for ſurely there muſt ever be an Eſſential Difference between an *Idea* and the *Act* of *Perception*: The *Idea* is *one* Thing, our *Perception* of *it* is *another*; and every *Act* or *Reſult* of our *Reflection*, if *ſuch* muſt be called *Ideas*, muſt be *Complex*, they cannot *even in Name* be admitted among our *Simple Ideas*. Our *Simple Ideas* are of things *External*, or the *Simple Objects* of our *Senſes* continually offering themſelves to the *Mind*, and they are there *received* and *treaſured* up as ſoon as in *any degree* we are capable of *apprehending*, and *diſcerning* one thing from another, even

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before we can give them their *proper Names* and *Appellations*.

Our *Simple Ideas* therefore being thus impressed upon the *Mind*, we are stored with them, even *before* we begin *distinctly* to apprehend them, and for that reason they seem to have grown up, as if they had been *born* with us.

By the *Help* and *Application* of these, and from the *Operations* of our own *Minds*, we form *Conceptions* of those *things*, of which we have no proper *Ideas*: We make them the *Symbol* and *Representation* of *Spiritual Beings*, and *Intellectual Truth*, and so we express our *Notions* and *Conceptions* of *Spiritual Things* by the means of that *Analogy* and *Correspondence*, by which our *Ideas*, and the *Soul*, they are lodged in, are *accomodated* to them.

This *Application* of our *Ideas* to express or represent to us the *Nature* of *God* and our *Duty* being as *early*, as our *Apprehensions* of them at first, where the *Mind* has been *cultivated* by a *Religious Education* from our *Infancy*, Those great *Truths* concerning *God* and our *Duty* seem also to have been *born*, and to have *grown* up with us.

To *these* I may add, what answers to what they call *Ideas* of *Reflection*, the several *Operations* of our *Minds* in our *internal Perception* and *Apprehension* of things, together with that *Consciousness*, we have of the *Operations* themselves, and the *Effects*, they produce, whether of *Assenting*, *Dissenting*, or *Doubting*. When our *Minds* and *Bodys*, are in a *right* Frame and Disposition,

tion, we are so certain of what passes *within* us, that we cannot be deceived, and the *Knowledge* which arises from our *Simple Ideas* of Things *without*, and from our *Consciousness* of the *Operations* of our *Mind within* is so *Direct*, and *Immediate*, that it admits no Proof, since None can be brought, that is stronger, than it self.

Hence it is that in these, and in things of Familiar and daily Acquaintance, whose *Truth* and *Agreement* are *evidently* discerned, we have an *Intuitive* rather, than a *Discursive* Knowledge.

Thus some *Truths* are so *obvious* and *plain*, that they seem *Connatural*, and the *Mind assents*, as soon as the *Terms*, they are proposed in, are *understood*: Other *Truths* there are, which lie *deeper*, and require a most *attentive* Consideration, before they appear to be *evidently certain.*

And therefore, tho' all *Truth*, which the *Mind* of *Man* can discover by its own *Operations*, is properly discovered by the *Light of Nature*, yet in the Common way of Speaking, *those Truths*, which are most *Universaly received*, and are of *most* Concern to Mankind, have obtained that *Character* in *Contradistinction* to *those*, that are brought to Light by a long Process, and Deduction of Reason.

This is the *Difference* between *Moral* and *Mathematical Truths*; *Moral Truths* are *obvious* to the meanest Capacity, and every unprejudiced *Mind* is so convinced of *them*, as neither to *doubt*, nor *mistake* about them, *They* are *not capable* indeed of *Demonstration*, and would be only more *obscure* and *perplexed*, if they were,

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as it is evident, they are made *more* Difficult by the vain Attempts to make them *more Demonſtrable.*

Mathematical Truths, if we will ſpeak properly, are only capable of *Demonſtration*, but as they are not of *general* Concern, the *Bulk* of *Mankind* is not acquainted with *them*, nor are all *Capacitys*, tho' *not* deficient in other Reſpects, able to apprehend *them* thro' a long Chain of References from one End to the other.

But ſtill in all *Truths* whether *Divine* or *Moral*, however *Obvious*, or even *Innate*, as if they were *written on the Heart*, they may ſeem, the *Mind* nevertheleſs proceeds and arrives at them by a *ſeries* of *Reaſoning*, and doth either *infer* the *Truth* and *Obligation* of our *Duty* from the *ſeveral Relations*, we bear to *God*, and the *World*, or elſe we come to the *Knowledge* of *them* by an *Imperceptible Progreſs*, and ſo *aſſent* to *them*, as *they* were taught from the *Beginning*, and inculcated on our *Infant* Years.

In the firſt way proceed the *Solitary Men*, and *ſelf taught Philoſophers*, who yet muſt have been at a mighty Loſs, had they realy lived out of all *Converſe* with *Books* and *Men*. In the ſame way likewiſe proceed all thoſe, who ſet forth *Natural Religion* in an *Artificial Dreſs*, and by putting thoſe two *Conſtituent parts* of it, *Theology* and *Morality* into a *Mathematical Form*, under a *Show* and in the *Language* of *Demonſtration*, talk in a *perplexed laborious* manner of the *plaineſt* Things in the World. For the *Notions* of *GOD* and our *Duty* are *plain* and *obvious*, and

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Common Apprehenſions do *readily receive* them, when they are *clearly expreſſed* without *confounding* the Underſtanding with what is *Incomprehenſible in GOD*, and without *involving* our *Duty* in the *Mazes* of an *impracticable Demonſtration*; For after all this vain Affectation, I muſt obſerve again that our *plain Notions* of *GOD*, and the *plain Precepts* of *Morality* are no leſs *certain*, and at the ſame time *much eaſier* to be apprehended, than *Mathematical Demonſtrations*.

And accordingly in the *other*, in the *plain beaten Road* proceed the *Generality* of *Mankind*, who do not *inveſtigate* theſe *Truths* by long *Deductions*, but arrive at *them*, as they were *taught*, and *inſtructed* from their *Youth*, and by this means they come to a *general Agreement* and *uniform Conſent* in ſome *prevailing Truths*.

If all Mankind are not agreed in the *ſame Notions* of *GOD* and *Morality*, it is an *Objection* againſt the *Light of Nature*, but *none* againſt the *Truth of Things*: *Truth* is fixed and unalterable, and depends not upon our *Conceptions*: *Virtue* is not the *Leſs ſuch*, becauſe ſome People in *different Countrys* have *different Opinions* in ſome Branches of *it*: *Truth* is *Eternal*, tho' not *Innate*: *That* is *not Virtue*, which Corrupt and Ignorant Men eſteem *ſo*, but *What in it ſelf carrys its own Truth and Excellence*: *It* is derived from the *Divine Mind*, and therefore implies an *Eternal Contradiction* to *whatever* is *Falſe* and *Evil*. This *Diſtinction* is *Eternal* with reſpect to *GOD*, tho' no *Evil* can approach *Him*; and it is *Real* with reſpect to *Man*, tho' *Evil* had *never* come into the World; We may as well argue againſt the

the *Being* of a *GOD* from the *Vile Conceptions* of *Men* concerning a *Deity*, as againſt the *Unvariable* and *Eternal Truth* of *Virtue* from the *different Opinions* of *Mankind*.

This *Argument* from the *different Eſtimation* of what is *Virtue* and *Vice* in *ſeveral Countrys* is as *ſtrong* againſt the *Light of Nature*, as againſt *Innate Ideas*: It turns its *Force* upon the *Head* of *thoſe* Men, *who* have *weakned* the *Foundation* of *Virtue*, and *confounded* the *Diſtinctions* of *Good* and *Evil*, and fully proves the *Inſufficiency* of *mere Natural Light* to lead Mankind into the *Knowledge* of *GOD* and their *Duty*.

As for *Innate Ideas* in this *Argument* we do not *maintain*, and there is no Neceſſity of *Aſſerting* them: we can arrive at *Knowledge* by another Way, and as long as *Truth* is ſo *Connatural* to the *Soul*, as long as our *Intellectual Faculty's* are *ſo* framed, as preſently to *cloſe* with it, when duely *propoſed*, it is the ſame thing, as if *it were written in our Hearts*: And ſo in a *Figurative* ſenſe the *Knowledge* of *GOD* and the *great Lines* of our *Duty* are ſaid to be: *There* we have ſuch a *Conviction* and *Conſcience* of the *Being of* a *GOD*, and of the *great Dutys of Religion*, and they are *ſo* deeply *impreſſed* and *engraven* on our *Minds*, that the moſt *Profligate*, who have once *received them*, can never utterly *deface them*.

And this leads me to the ſecond Enquiry, which is,

2. What Account the *Scriptures* give us of the *Light of Nature*.

The *Scriptures* ſpeak of the *Light of Nature* in ſeveral places of the *Old* and *New Teſtament*, and

and in ſpeaking of it, they do manifeſtly ſet forth, and *diſtinguiſh three* Parts in it: The *Knowledge* of *GOD*; the *Knowledge* of our *Duty*: and that *Natural Conſcience* of *Well* or *Ill doing*, which is the *neceſſary Conſequence* of our *Knowledge*.

1. As to the *Knowledge* Mankind is there ſuppoſed to have of *GOD*, I muſt obſerve,

1. That according to the *Scriptures Mankind* was *Originaly* inſtructed in the *Knowledge* of the *True GOD*: The *Sacred Writings* go all along upon the *ſuppoſition* of ſuch *Original Inſtruction*, whether it was given by an *immediate Revelation* from *GOD*, or by an *Internal Illumination* of the *Mind* in our *firſt Parents*, which is all one in the Effect, and ſuppoſes in the *Soul* of *Man* an *Inward Principle* and *Capacity* to *diſcern*, *receive*, and *aſſent* to the *Truth* propoſed. For according to the Words of *Elihu* in this *Book* of [a] *Job*: *There is a Spirit in Man*, and *the Inſpiration of the Almighty giveth them Underſtanding*: By which (as I apprehend it) he means not that *every Man* is *immediately inſpired*, but that the *Spirit of Man* and his *Intellectual Facultys* are a *Divine Principle breathed* into him by *GOD Himſelf*, *Who*, as he expreſſes it in the *thirty fifth Chapter*, [b] *teacheth us more than the Beaſts of the Earth*, *and maketh us wiſer*, *than the Fowls of Heaven*.

Thus diſcourſeth *Elihu*, before there was any *written Revelation*, and this is the faireſt Picture of the *Light of Nature* drawn by a Hand not di-

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a XXXII. 8. *b* v. 11.

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rected by Revelation, For tho' the *Author* or *Compiler* of this *Book* was Inſpired to Record faithfully whatever was uttered by GOD *Almighty*, by *Job*, and his Friends, yea even by *Satan* himſelf, yet the particular Paſſages which *Job* and his Friends uttered, moſt certainly thoſe of *Satan*, were *not Inſpired*. So it is true, that *Satan* ſpoke, as is here related, Not, that what he ſaid was true: For here, as ever, he is a *falſe Accuſer*, and a *Murderer*, and a *Lyar* from the *Beginning*: Neither did *Job* nor his Friends ſpeak by *Inſpiration*, tho' *Job* and *Elihu* ſpake that, which is *right* and *Good*. But it is manifeſt his three *Friends* ſpake their own private Thoughts and Opinions concerning the Ways and Diſpenſations of GOD. [a] For *the Lord ſaid unto Eliphaz the Temanite, my Wrath is kindled againſt thee, and againſt thy two friends, for ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant Job hath*; But *Elihu* was not reproved, neither was he required to *offer* up for himſelf a *Burnt-offering*, and therefore tho' not inſpired, what he delivered was *right* and *approved* by GOD Himſelf: For while the other three ſpeaking by the *Light of Nature* argued wrong and miſtook in their Deductions, he ſpake truly and reaſoned juſtly according to the *Principles* of the *ſame Natural Light*: For even the *Light of Nature* will teach us this Truth, as the Firſt and moſt Fundamental Principle of *Knowledge*, in anſwer to the *Queſtion* propounded by GOD *Himſelf*, *That it is* GOD, [b] *who hath put*

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a XLII. 7. b XXXVIII. 36.

Wisdom in the Inward Parts, and hath given Understanding to the Heart.

Not to proceed in a long Examination of this *Natural Light* according to the *Scriptures*, I would only from the account *there* given of it observe these three Things.

1. That tho' the *Light of Nature* alone was not able to discover, or retain the *true Knowledge* of GOD and his *Attributes*, yet that in all Ages and Nations this *Light* shined the cleareſt where *Religion* was trueſt, and the further Men departed from the *true Knowledge* of GOD, the *Light of Nature* was the more darkned, till in some *Nations* it was almoſt extinguiſhed.

From hence it is plain, that as some *Original Revelation* firſt brought these *Objects* to the *Light of Nature*, the *Light of Nature* discerned them clearly and distinctly according to the *Truth*, as long as they were held unto it, and presented by that *Revelation*. But when the *Revelation* itself was overcaſt, and the *Original Doctrines* began in proceſs of time to be varied, the *Light of Nature* beheld them no more in their *firſt Truth* and *Purity*, but then it saw them, as they were obscured and misrepresented by a corrupt Tradition, which grew more and more Erroneous, till at laſt it settled in *Polytheism* and *Idolatry*, and as to *Morality*, in a *Practice* suitable to the *Falseneſs* of their *Divinity*. Agreeably to this I would observe secondly,

2. That the *Scriptures* ever since the *Fall* represent the *Light of Nature* weakened and obscured to that Degree, that we ought according to our *Bleſſed Saviour's Admonition*, to

[a] *take*

[a] *take heed, that the Light, which is in us be not Darkneſs; for if the Light that is in us be Darkneſs, how great is that Darkneſs!* In this Condition St *Paul* repreſents the *Gentile* World, [b] *who walk in the Vanity of their Mind, having the Underſtanding darkened, being alienated from the Life of* GOD *by the Ignorance, that is in them becauſe of the Blindneſs of their Hearts*: This was the deplorable Condition of Mankind under the ſole Conduct of *Natural Light alone*; and *Solomon* had given us long before the true Reaſon of it: [c] *GOD hath made Man upright, but they have ſought out many Inventions.* He came *Perfect* and *Spotleſs* out of the Hands of his *Creator*; but now he hath corrupted and defiled his Soul: The *Light* that was in him, burned with Purity and Clearneſs, as in the Morning of his Creation, and flamed upright like an *acceptable Sacrifice* with a *direct Aſcent* to Heaven; but now it is *clouded* and *obſtructed*, and *beaten down* to Earth. It is almoſt choked, and extinguiſhed by the groſs Vapours of our Luſts and inordinate Affections.

This *Blindneſs* of Man is drawn with great Truth and the moſt lively Expreſſion by a Maſterly Hand in the *Book* called the *Wiſdom of Solomon*, where he is introduced praying to GOD for *Wiſdom*: And as it is not received for an *Inſpired Writing*, it hath this Advantage, that it is a more *unconteſted* Acknowledgment made by the *Light of Nature* concerning its own *Weakneſs*

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a Luke XI. 35. Matth. VI. 23. *b* Epheſ. IV. 17, 18. *c* Eccleſ. VII. 29.

and *Imperfection* very appoſite to the *Words* of my *Text*.

[a] *What Man is he, that can know the Counſel of GOD? or who can think, what the Will of the LORD is? for the Thoughts of Mortal Men are miſerable, and our Devices are but uncertain: for the Corruptible Body preſſeth down the Soul, and the Earthly Tabernacle weigheth down the Mind, that muſeth upon many things; And hardly do we gueſs aright at the things which are upon Earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us; but the things that are in Heaven who hath ſearched out? and thy Counſel who hath known? except Thou give Wiſdom and ſend thy Holy Spirit from above?*

Thirdly I would obſerve,

3. That notwithſtanding all theſe *Defects* God *Almighty* ever appeals to the *Light of Nature*, and makes Mankind *accountable* for the *right Uſe* and *Improvement* of it: For however the World thro' its manifold Corruptions had loſt the *Knowledge* of the *True* God, and was ſunk into the Vileſt and moſt Abject *Idolatry*, yet God had given unto Men a *ſtanding* and *perpetual Evidence* of *Himſelf* in the *Works* of *Creation*, and in the *Adminiſtration* of his *Providence*: To *them* He appeals as to the *Book of Nature* written in the faireſt and moſt diſtinguiſhed *Characters*: Thus *Paul* and *Barnabas* in reſtraining the Men of *Lyſtra* from doing Sacrifice unto them, while they preached the *Living* God, argued from his *Providence*, that however the *World* was *loſt* in *Ignorance* of the *True* God,

[a] Wiſd. IX. 13, &c.

[3] *Ne-*

[a] *Nevertheleſs he left not Himſelf without Witneſs; in that He did Good, and gave us Rain from Heaven, and fruitful Seaſons, filling our hearts with food and gladneſs.* To the ſame Purpoſe from the Order and Diſpoſition of *Providence*, [b] St *Paul* argues with the *Athenians*, when he declares unto them the *Unknown* God, *whom they ignorantly worſhipped*, even the *Creator* of the *World.* And in the *firſt Chapter* of his *Epiſtle* to the [c] *Romans*, he inſiſts upon the *Creation* of the World, as an Argument ſo convincing, as to *render them without excuſe. For the Inviſible things of Him from the Creation of the World are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even His Eternal Power and GODHEAD, So that they are without Excuſe*, becauſe they have reſiſted, and perverted this *Natural* Evidence, and *changed the Truth of GOD into a Lie, Worſhipping the Creature*, even the Vileſt of them, *more than the Creator, who is Bleſſed for Ever. Amen.* The *Proofs* were ſurely moſt Strong and Convincing, when they miſtook the *Evidence* for the *Point* it was to prove; and thus their *Idolatry* was an Argument of their *Belief*, and at the ſame time the Reaſon of their *Condemnation*, when they became ſo ſtupid, as to worſhip not only the *Works* of God, but even the *Works* of *their own Hands.* For this ſtrange Abuſe and Neglect of *Natural Light*, even *for this Cauſe GOD gave them up to a reprobate and abandoned Mind*, in all Inſtances of the utmoſt Corrup-

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a Acts XIV. 17. *b* Acts XVII. 23, &c. *c* Rom. I. 20, &c.

tion, even to the very defacement of *Humane Nature.*

What hath been ſaid of the *Knowledge* Men had of GOD by the *Light of Nature* as repreſented in the *Scriptures* may be applied

2. To the Knowledge Men had of His Laws, and their Duty.

For tho' from the Account given in the *firſt* Chapter of the *Epiſtle* to the *Romans*, of the *Blindneſs* and *Degeneracy* of *Men*, we ſhould hardly expect to find any *Law* or *Direction* of *Practice* among *them*, yet in the *ſecond Chapter* the *Apoſtle* tells us [a] *that when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by Nature the Things contained in the Law, theſe having not the Law are a Law unto themſelves*: Some *Fundamental Principles* of *Natural Religion*, however involved in *Superſtition* and *Error*, were neceſſarily preſerved: The *Acknowledgment* of a *Divine* BEING, and the *great Rules* of *Juſtice*, and *Judgment* were neceſſary to the very *Being* and *Subſiſtence* of all *Communitys*, and ſo far at leaſt, as the *ſupport* of *Society* required, if *Nature* had not *taught* them, the *Magiſtrate* muſt have *exacted them* in the ſame manner, he now puniſheth the Violation of them.

The Knowledge Men had of the Law of GOD and their Duty was not Perfect or Exact, but ſtill their Capacity of Knowing more, and their Tranſgreſſion of what they knew rendered them *without Excuſe.* There is no Precept of *Morality*, but carrys its own Conviction with it. The *Light* of *Nature* preſently diſcerns the *Rea-*

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[a] Rom. II. 14.

ſonableneſs

ſonableneſs and *Obligation* of *it*, and however the World degenerated more and more, GOD ALMIGHTY ſtill looked upon Mankind as *accountable* for their *Tranſgreſſions*, and *anſwerable* for their *Abuſe* of *that Reaſon*, and *Natural Light*, which *He* had given them. It is ſaid indeed that *the Heathen had not knowledge of his Laws*,[a] as we read in our old *Tranſlation*, but this is not to be underſtood *abſolutely*, but *comparatively*, and not of the *Law of Nature eſpecialy*, but of the *peculiar* Declaration of his Will and Pleaſure to the *Jews*, as they were his *choſen People*, *He ſhewed his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and Ordinances unto Iſrael: He hath not dealt ſo with any Nation, neither have the Heathen Knowledge of his Laws.* But for the *Law of Nature*, as it is of *Univerſal Obligation* He exacts it of all *Mankind*, and will admit of no *Ignorance* as a *Plea* for the *Violation* of *it*: Whether it were *Originaly* revealed and declared by GOD *Himſelf*, or whether Man by the Diſquiſitions of his own Reaſon could work out all the ſeveral Dutys of it, GOD ſuppoſes them to know it, or their *Ignorance* to be *Criminal*, and upon this ground He will judge them *hereafter*; as upon this ground He did all along by his *Prophets* denounce his *Judgments* againſt them. And it was upon the Preſumption of this Knowledge of their Duty that GOD ſent *Jonah* to the *Ninevites* to preach unto them, and proclaim [b] *Yet forty Days, and Nineveh ſhall be overthrown.* The *Prophet* was not ſent to teach them their Duty, but meerly

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a Pſal. CXLVII. 20. b Jonah III. 4.

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to call upon them to repent of their Transgressions, and *they believed* GOD, and *turned from their Evil ways*. The whole Passage is remarkable, the Application is made to their Natural Knowledge, and the Event was answerable to their Obedience. *And GOD saw their Works, that they turned from their Evil way, and GOD repented of the Evil, that He said He would do unto them, and He did it not.* The great Patrons of Natural Light and Reason against Revelation must at least suppose, besides the sufficiency of that Light, that Mankind hath a perfect Knowledge of GOD and their Duty, and that they are accountable to GOD for their Actions: whether they come to know the Will of GOD by *Reason* or *Revelation* it is all one as to their Obligation. GOD looks upon them as some way or other capable of being informed of their Duty, and whether they will charge themselves with the Knowledge of it, or derive their Knowledge from the Declaration of GOD's Will; whether they will lay their Obligation upon the *Reasonableness* and *Fitness* of *things*, and deduce the several Dutys from the several *Relations* they stand in to GOD and each other, still their Duty to GOD is the grand and *Fundamental* Doctrine of *Natural Religion* in the first place: and that they are accountable for their Actions is a clear and undeniable Dictate of their Reason.

Together with the *Knowledge* the World had, of GOD and their *Duty*, the *Scriptures* do set forth thirdly,

3. The *Conſcience* of *Well* or *Ill doing*, or that *Natural Conſcience*, which is the Conſequence of their Knowledge.

We have a *Conſciouſneſs* within our ſelves of the Freedom and Nature of our Actions: we are taught by the *Light of Nature* to diſtinguiſh between *Good* and *Evil*: Even whilſt againſt our Judgment we do Evil, we [a] *conſent unto the Law, that it is Good.* We are inwardly convinced of our Obligation to do our Duty, and to avoid Tranſgreſſion. From hence ariſes the *Conſcience* of *Well* or *Ill doing*, and from this *Conſcience* that Complacency and Satisfaction, which attend the Performance, and that Remorſe and Diſpleaſure, which follow the Violation of the great Dutys of Morality, according to the *Apoſtles* Declaration to the *Gentiles*, [b] *Theſe having not the Law, and yet doing by Nature the Things contained in the Law, are a Law unto themſelves*, Thoſe of them are a Law unto themſelves, οἵτινες, *whoſoever* among them *ſhew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conſcience alſo bearing Witneſs, and their Thoughts the mean while accuſing or elſe excuſing one another*; That is each Man's Conſcience, who acknowledgeth the *Law* of *Nature* bearing Witneſs at the ſame time, and his Thoughts accuſing or excuſing him by turns, as he had done Good or Evil: This I take to be the true Conſtruction of the place; For tho' Men may be ſo hardened, and have their Underſtanding ſo darkened, as almoſt to put out the *Light of Nature* and ſtiffle

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a Rom. VII. 16. *b* Rom. II. 15.

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all Remorſe of Conſcience, yet where *they are not* [a] *paſt feeling*, where the *Conſcience is not* [b] *ſeared as it were with an hot Iron*, the Force of it will exert itſelf; for the moſt abandon'd Wretches, mentioned in the firſt Chapter *know, that they, who do ſuch things, are worthy of Death*; and *Solomon* hath taught us, that [c] *the Spirit of Man*, by which he means *Natural Conſcience, is the Candle* or *Lamp of the Lord, ſearching all the Inward Parts of the Belly*, that is the *deepeſt*, and moſt *ſecret Receſſes* of our *Guilt*.

We have now taken a general View of the *Strength* and *Compaſs* of our *Natural Powers*, whether we conſider the *Light of Nature* according to the Common Notions of Mankind, or according to the Account given of it in the Scriptures.

I have to the Knowledge of God joyned the Knowledge and Conſcience of our Duty, becauſe theſe depend upon our Knowledge of God, and we may be properly ſaid to know ſo much of God, as we know of our Duty.

It is a Point of meer Speculation, and no better than an Amuſing Problem to enquire, whether the *Light of Nature* is able to direct us *further* in the Knowledge of God, than it appears actualy to have *done*.

That all the great *Truths* of *Natural Religion* may be diſcovered by the meer Strength of *Reaſon*, we ſhould readily allow, were it not Evident, that *meer Reaſon* has been very defective both in Speculation and Practice, and the *Light*

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a Eph. IV. 19. b 1 Tim. IV. 2. c Prov. XX. 27.

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of Nature ſhines not with that ſtrength and clearneſs, as it did at our firſt Creation. However it is ſufficient to all the Purpoſes of Conſcience and Obligation, that the *great Dutys* of *Natural Religion* however diſcovered are immediately received and acknowledged by the Mind as undoubted Truths of ſtrict and Eternal *Obligation.*

The Intereſts, Evidence, and Obligation of Natural Religion being thus far ſecured, I ſhall with Reference to the grand Fundamental Article of it in the following Diſcourſes, undertake to prove that tho' the *Light of Nature* directed Men to the Acknowledgment of a DIVINE BEING, yet in this ſtate of Depravity and Darkneſs it was not able to lead them into the Knowledge of the ONE TRUE GOD, nor to give them right and worthy Conceptions of Him. That it was able neither *Originaly* to diſcover, nor when by other Means made known, to *preſerve* the Knowledge of Him in the World.

If we ſuppoſe no Original Revelation, we muſt alſo ſuppoſe the *Knowledge* of the True GOD never to have obtained among Men, till it pleaſed Him to *reveal* Himſelf, and no further, than He ſo revealed Himſelf. For look into all Nations and Ages the Fact is evident, ſo far as Hiſtory can inform us; wherever we find a true Religion we find at the ſame time a *Revelation*: and falſe Religions have ſtill prevailed from the Loſs or Neglect of the *Original* or *Subſequent* Revelations.

From the *Scriptures* it is plain, that GOD revealed Himſelf to Man as ſoon as He created him,

him, and that He continued such Revelations at proper Intervals to keep up and preserve the Knowledge of Himself in the World: That before the Flood this Knowledge was lost, except in the Family of *Noah*, thro' Universal Wickedness and Neglect, and soon after the Flood is was lost again, except in the Family of *Shem*, when Men departed from the Religion, which *Noah* had been taught and professed, and it had been lost universaly, had not God called *Abraham* from his Father's House, and checqued Idolatry by a *special Revelation*.

Upon this State of the Fact with regard to the common Notions, and to the *Scripture Account* of the *Light of Nature*, I would for a *Conclusion* offer these following Considerations.

1. That as from the Beginning the *Light of Nature* was guided by an *Original Revelation*, it hath ever since been assisted in those Ages and Nations, where a *special Revelation* never came, by those *Notions* which Mankind *first* received of a *Deity*. Such an *Original Revelation* the Scriptures of the Old Testament declare, as it was derived from *Adam*, and delivered down by *Noah* to his Posterity: And St *Paul* in his [a] Epistle to the *Romans* by the Tenour and whole Drift of his Argument supposes it: For when he assigns the Reasons, which rendered Men *inexcusable* for losing the Knowledge of the True God, and for which God *gave them up to a reprobate Mind*, he charges them, that is the first Idolaters from *Noah*, and likewise all their

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a Chap. I. 19, 20, &c.

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Poſterity, as they ſtill degenerated more and more, with an *Original Knowledge* of GOD, and a Neglect of thoſe Natural Manifeſtations, GOD had given of Himſelf, ſufficient to have preſerved them from ſuch groſs Idolatry. Upon this ground he makes good his Inference at the 20*th* verſe, *So that they are without Excuſe, becauſe when they knew GOD, they glorified Him not as GOD*: So that at ſome time Men were in Poſſeſſion of this Knowledge, And [a] *even as they did not like to retain GOD in their Knowledge, He gave them up* as is there related at large. The Knowledge they once had, refers up therefore to the Days of *Noah*, from whoſe Death to the Call of *Abraham* there are ſo few Years, that it is wonderful to think, that Idolatry in ſo ſhort a ſpace ſhould ſo Univerſaly prevail, till in the Proceſs of Time from loſing the *revealed Knowledge* of GOD, Mankind ſunk into the darkeſt Ignorance, and loſt the *Natural Knowledge* alſo.

If this Paſſage does not expreſly mention the *Revealed Knowledge*, as it doth the *Natural*, yet it plainly ſuppoſes the *Revealed* to have been the *Original Knowledge* Men had of the CREATOR, and the firſt Sin here charged upon them is an Offence againſt this Revelation, [b] *Profeſſing themſelves Wiſe they became Fools, And changed the Glory of the Uncorruptible GOD into an Image made like to Corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four footed Beaſts, and creeping Things.* This *Glory* of the *Uncorruptible* GOD

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a v. 28. *b* v. 22, 23.

is the *Schechinah* or the Manifestation of the Divine Presence, when God vouchsafed to appear and make his Glory Visible unto Men. In these Appearances and Manifestations of his Glory He spoke and conversed with *Mankind*, declaring his *Pleasure* and *Commandments* to them: This therefore was their *Sin*, their *debasing* the *Divine Glory* of the *Uncorruptible* God, and *representing it* by the *Image* of Corruptible Man; yea so wretchedly Blind and Degenerate they grew, that they *changed his Glory into Images made like unto Birds, and four footed Beasts, and creeping Things.* Thus [a] *they changed the Truth of GOD into a Ly*: they first made these the Symbols of the *Deity*, afterwards the Objects of their *Adoration*, [b] *worshipping and serving the Creature more than the Creator, who is Blessed for ever. Amen.*

[c] *For this Cause GOD gave them up to vile Affections, and as they did not like to retain GOD in their Knowledge, He gave them over to a Reprobate Mind.* This whole Discourse of the *Apostle* supposes an Intercourse between God and Man, and consequently an Original Revelation from which Men departed, till they were so lost, and bewildered, as not to discern the Evidence, which Nature gives, when [d] *The Heavens declare the Glory of GOD, and the Firmament sheweth his handy Work*: For tho' *their Sound is gone out into all Lands, and their Words into the Ends of the World, yet there is neither Speech nor*

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a Rom. I. 25. b v. 25. c v. 26. d Ps. XIX. 1, &c.

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Language, *where their Voice* when *heard*, was *truly underſtood* without *Revelation* expounding it.

Beſides this Collection from the *Apoſtle*'s Words, that God did *Originaly Reveal Himſelf* to Mankind, there are theſe two Arguments for a *General Revelation* at *firſt*, and a *Special One afterwards*, That all *Inſtituted Worſhip* ſuppoſes a *Revelation*, and the general Agreement in *Offering Sacrifices*, however the *Rites* were in after times perverted by *Idolatry* and *Superſtition*, plainly evinces an *Original Appointment*.

And for a *Special Revelation* the great Writers among the Heathen are ſo far true, as they agree with the Sacred Writings, and they do ſtill approach *nearer* unto, or depart *further* from the Truth, as their Notions are *more* or *leſs* correſpondent to the *Sacred Text*.

That this by any immediate Conſequence proves the Books of *Moſes*, or any other parts of the *Scriptures* to be inſpired, I do not ſay, but as there are no Writings in all Ages backward, beſides the *Jewiſh* to be found, which do Uniformly teach us the Knowledge of the True God, and give us worthy Conceptions of Him, the *Scriptures* cannot be pretended to be wrote by the *meer Light of Nature*, becauſe no ſuch Productions among all other Writers are to be found: and as the Appearances of the True God, and his own Declarations concerning Himſelf, his *Nature*, and his *Attributes* are there Hiſtoricaly related ſo every way worthy of Himſelf, we cannot doubt their being a *Divine Revelation*: And ſo far, as the *Heathen* Writers were acquainted with *them*, and *enlightened* by *them*,

them, as in ſeveral *Paſſages* of their *Books* they ſeem to have been, we may conclude, that even their Writings are far from being the Produce of *meer Natural Reaſon*, or the *Light of Nature alone*.

2. For to ſtrengthen this ariſes this ſecond Conſideration.

That we have not at this Time any *Writings* remaining either in *Hiſtory* or *Philoſophy*, before our *Saviour*'s *Coming*, that give an Account of meer *Natural Religion* without ſome mixture of *Revelation*. If there be any Exceptions to this Remark, they muſt be drawn from thoſe *Ignorant* and *Barbarous Nations*, who have almoſt loſt the very Notions of a *Deity*, and carry beſides their *Make* hardly any *Marks* of *Humanity*: Their *Writings* indeed are not to be expected, but when their *ſentiments*, or rather *no ſentiments*, are produced, as ſometimes they have been by the *Patrons* of *Natural Religion* for Inſtances againſt Univerſal Conſent, they are ſtronger Inſtances againſt the *Light of Nature* it ſelf, and eſpecialy againſt its Ability of its ſelf to teach, or preſerve the true Knowledge of GOD.

But in thoſe Nations, where Knowledge has been cultivated by Learning, we may trace a Correſpondence with that *Original Revelation* GOD *firſt* made of Himſelf to Mankind, and with the more *particular Revelation* He *afterwards* gave the *Jews*: It is Eaſy to account how ſuch an *Original Revelation* might be preſerved in ſome general Notions by *Tradition* for ſome *Generations*, and much eaſier, how the

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Revelation committed to *Writing* as delivered by *Moses* and the *Prophets*, might be known to those *Sages*, who travelled into all Countrys in search of Knowledge; and from several Passages of their Writings it is Evident, that they were acquainted with the *Doctrines*, if not with the *Sacred Writings* themselves, and were no Strangers to the *Jewish Theology*, by which without acknowledging it they modelled their own Schemes, and mixed some *Truth* with their *Superstitions*.

3. From the *first Chapter* to the *Romans* I would for a Conclusion of all observe, that the *Apostle* in describing the *Idolatry* and *Wickedness* of the World points out the *true Causes* and *Principles* of *Heresy* and *Infidelity*: *They are without Excuse* [a] *because that when they knew GOD, they glorified Him not as GOD, neither were Thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkned*: *Professing themselves to be Wise, they became Fools*, as all such vain *Pretenders* are, and the Consequence was, *They changed the Glory of the Uncorruptible GOD into Images like unto Beasts and Themselves*: The Causes of so foul an *Apostasie* here assigned are not only the Neglect of those Means of Knowledge, that were afforded them, but more especialy their *Neglect* of *GOD's Worship* and their *Ingratitude*: *Neither were they Thankful*: This Expression denotes *both*: neither in their *Worship* nor *Behaviour* did they return Thanks unto

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[a] Rom. I. 21, 22.

Him: This denotes alſo their Wickedneſs and Corruption; and then their Affectation of Wiſdom pointed out the Conceitedneſs and Vanity of their Hearts: *They became vain in their Imagination, and their fooliſh Heart was darkned*: This Vanity and Self Conceit conſpiring with Corrupt and Negligent Minds, betrayed them to the greateſt Folly, *Profeſſing themſelves to be Wiſe they became Fools.*

But let us, *my beloved Brethren,* [a] *caſt down our Vain Imaginations, and every high thing, that exalteth it ſelf againſt the Knowledge of GOD, and bring into Captivity every thought to the Obedience of Chriſt*; that being convinced of the Weakneſs of our Carnal Reaſon we may ſubmit our Minds to the Strength and Evidence of the *Goſpel*; an Evidence derived from the *Veracity*, *Wiſdom* and *Power* of GOD. [b] *Wherefore* according to St *Peter*'s Exhortation, *laying aſide all Malice, and all Guile and Hypocriſy, As new born Babes* of pure and unprejudicate Minds, *deſire the ſincere Milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.* Thus ſhall we effectualy root out thoſe corrupt *Principles* of *Hereſie* and *Infidelity*, which grow of a *Proud* and a *Carnal Mind.* [c] *Wherefore,* as St *James* directs us, *lay apart all Filthineſs and ſuperfluity of Naughtineſs, and receive with meekneſs the Engrafted Word, which is able to ſave your Souls.*

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a 2 Cor. X. 5. *b* 1 Pet. II. 1, 2. *c* James I. 21.

That

That this may be the Blessed Effect of his *Word* in our Hearts, *GOD of his Infinite Mercy grant for Jesus Christ his sake,*

To whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour and Power, all Praise and Adoration for Ever and Ever. Amen.

SERMON III.

Preached *Feb.* 6. 1728-9.

JOB XI. 7.

Canſt Thou by ſearching find out GOD? *Canſt thou find out the* Almighty *unto Perfection*?

MY Endeavours hitherto have been to ſhow the cloſe Connection between *Hereſy* and *Infidelity*, as each proceeds upon the ſame *Common Principles*: Among theſe the main and *Fundamental Principle* is this, *That all Doctrines and Propoſitions whatſoever, Revealed, as well as Unrevealed are to be judged of and determined by the Light of Nature and the Strength of Reaſon*; in Conſequence of which we are obliged to believe no further than this *Natural Light* and *Reaſon* can direct us, that is no further, than we can compre-

hend, and account for what we are required to believe.

Now this *Principle* is *partly* True, nor ſhould we make any Exception to the *general* Poſition, were it not *miſapplied* and *diverted* from its genuin Courſe; as if the *Object* of our *Faith* muſt be the *Subject* of our *Knowledge* as much as is any *Object* of our *Senſes*. For it is True, that we cannot believe againſt our *Natural Light* and Apprehenſion of Things, but then it is equaly True, that we may believe thoſe Truths, of which we have no Apprehenſion by the *Light of Nature* to diſcover them at *firſt*, nor any Power in the Capacity of our Reaſon to comprehend them *afterwards*.

This is a Dictate of *Reaſon*, and *Natural Religion* as well as *Revealed* is founded on it; For in *Natural Religion* there are Truths, which we cannot comprehend, and yet the ſame Reaſon, which cannot comprehend them doth nevertheleſs convince us, that we muſt believe them; So that tho' there are ſome *Truths* which by our *Natural Light* we cannot originaly diſcover, as the Exiſtence of *Angels*, and all Points of meer Revelation, and ſome *Truths* we can never comprehend, as the *Eſſence* and *Attributes* of GOD, yet the *Light of Nature* will teach us, that we muſt believe them, when diſcovered, tho' we cannot comprehend them.

But the Perſons I am concerned with, while they *boaſt* the *Sufficiency*, do *ſtop* the *Progreſs* of this *Light*: They do not only confine their Belief to their Knowledge, but they confine their Knowledge to direct and Adequate Ideas: they pre-

pretend indeed to have clear Ideas, as of *Spirit*, where in Truth they have no Idea at all, and then according to their other Principle, since they can believe no further, than they can know, and since they can know no further, than they have Ideas, they cannot believe any thing of a Spiritual Nature, especialy if we add their *third* ground, which is to require *Sensible Evidence* and *Demonstration*; For these destroy all Belief, and Spiritual Beings are not capable of them.

However since they conduct themselves by these *Principles*, and at the same time pretend to make the *Light of Nature* their sole *Guide*, and their own *Reason* the only *Measure* and *Standard* of Belief, without any regard to the *Evidence* and *Authority* upon which any Point is proposed, I thought it not improper to consider this *Pretension*, and in that view after I had examined those *three Principles* of *theirs*, which are so destructive of all Faith, and do contract our Knowledge to narrower Bounds, than Nature her self has set us, I proceeded to the Question in the Text: *Canst Thou by searching find out GOD? Canst Thou find out the Almighty unto Perfection?*

These Words, as I have already said, acquaint us, that there is an Incomprehensible Being, Transcendently above the utmost reach of our Intellectual Powers.

That we have a *Knowledge* of this Transcendent Being is *supposed*.

That after our utmost searches we can *Know Him*

Him unto Perfection is by this form of Speaking moſt ſtrongly *denied.*

With Reſpect to both theſe my purpoſe was to conſider the *Strength* and *Compaſs* of our *Natural Powers*, how far they will carry us in the Knowledge of God. And in order to this in my laſt Diſcourſe I propoſed firſt,

1. To enquire into and fix what That is, which is *Commonly* called the *Light of Nature.* Secondly,

2. What Account the *Scriptures* give us of it. And thirdly,

3. To Conclude with ſome proper Obſervations.

With Regard to the firſt, I have ſhowed the Foundation, that Reaſon proceeds upon in the Attainment of Knowledge, which is derived from thoſe ſenſible Objects we are Converſant with, and from its own Operations upon them, together with the Conſciouſneſs the Mind hath of its own Operations.

This Knowledge is neither *Innate*, nor *Demonſtrative*, except in *Mathematical* Concluſions; if it were either, Mens Conceptions concerning God and their Duty would be Uniform, and however Difference of Sentiments may be an Argument againſt *Innate Ideas*, I have ſhewed, it is no leſs an Argument againſt the *Light of Nature*, and proves it utterly inſufficient to lead Mankind into the Knowledge of God and their Duty.

2. As to the Second I obſerved, that the *Scriptures*

Scriptures ſpeaking of the *Light of Nature*, do diſtinguiſh *three parts* in it: The *Knowledge* of GOD: the *Knowledge* of *our Duty*: and the *Conſcience* of *Well* or *Ill doing*, which is the neceſſary *Conſequence* of that *Knowledge*.

But then firſt they do aſcribe the Knowledge of GOD *Originaly* to *Revelation*: ſecondly ever ſince the *Fall* they ſet forth the *Weakneſs* and *Depravity* of *Humane Nature*: and thirdly from the Scriptures we find, that notwithſtanding the Defects brought upon Mankind by the *Fall*, our good GOD appeals to the *Light of Nature*, and exacts of Mankind the due Improvement of it for ſo much, as may be known of GOD, and for the Conſcience of their Duty.

Theſe two Accounts lead us to the ſecond Propoſition.

II. That we cannot find out the Almighty unto Perfection. And from them we may learn, firſt,

1. The *Weakneſs* of this *Light of Nature* left *unaſſiſted* to it ſelf.

2. Its *Capacity* to extend its Views upon proper Inſtructions.

3. That under all poſſible Advantages we cannot attain to a full, and Adequate Knowledge of the Almighty.

And ſo I proceed to the further Conſideration of the Subject before us.

1. As to the firſt, Its *Weakneſs* when left *unaſſiſted* to it ſelf, the *Light of Nature* may be con-

conſidered in its *Original Strength* and *Perfection*, or in its *depraved State* and *Moral Imperfection*: For, either the *Light of Nature* was always in this weak and imperfect State, or *it* hath at ſome time been darkned, and our Intellectual Facultys have been impaired: That we came not *Originaly* in ſo Imperfect a State out of the Hands of our *Creator* is highly *probable* from the Deductions of *Reaſon*: It is *certain* from *Revelation*. Upon the Foot of *Reaſon* alone, if we ſhould ſuppoſe Man to be *Weak*, compared with any higher Order of Intellectual Beings, yet we cannot ſuppoſe him *Wicked*: God's Goodneſs made him not, nor was obliged to make him Wiſe and Underſtanding as an Angel, either in the Manner or Meaſure of his Facultys; but the Goodneſs of God was engaged to create him Innocent, that is Perfect according to his Nature, and the Rank he holds in the Order and Scale of Being.

We know how forward ſome People are to make Man's *Guilt*, eſpecialy his *Puniſhment* an *Impeachment* of God's *Goodneſs*; but theſe Reaſoners muſt therefore own that it is moſt Conſonant to the Goodneſs of God *to have Created Man Upright*; and therefore, when we find that the *Weakneſs* of our *Nature* is derived from our *Guilt*, and accompanied with a *Depravity* of the *Will* and *Affections*, we ſhall abſolve the Goodneſs of God, and look more carefully into our ſelves: The moſt Partial cannot call *this* the *Perfection* of Nature: He that is not ſenſible of Blindneſs in his Underſtanding, Perverſeneſs in his Will, and Diſorder in his Affections, is blinder

blinder than the reſt of the World, and his Condition is ſo much the worſe, as he is leſs ſenſible of it. We have proper and juſt Notions of *Perfection*, either *Comparatively* or *Abſolutely* conſidered, and if the preſent Condition of Human Life can in *any ſenſe* be called a *State* of *Perfection*, we confound our Language and Conceptions of things, and it is the ſame, as if we made no Difference between a Man that is Crooked, Lame, and Blind, and a Man that is Straight and Upright with the perfect Uſe of all his Limbs and Senſes.

But upon the *other* ſuppoſition, That Man was *Perfect* in his *Intellectual Facultys*: That his *Underſtanding* was Unclouded: his *Will* Unbiaſſed: his *Affections* Regular, ſtill his *Intellectual Facultys* are *limited* and *circumſcribed* within very *narrow Bounds* with reſpect to *Spiritual Objects*, and indeed to *every Object*, which is removed from an Immediate Communication with the Senſes. In the Material World we are ignorant of what is *Inviſible*, as are the *Eſſences* of Things, ſo as to form any *Ideas* of them at all, or any *Conceptions* of them ſeparate from their *Propertys*, and leaſt of all can we attain to a full and adequate *Knowledge of the Almighty.*

In this Caſe there is no *Difference* between our *Original* and our *preſent* Condition: The Facultys and Capacitys of the Soul are the ſame in *both*: However Luſt and Paſſion may blind Men now, they could proceed no further by their *Natural* Strength in the Knowledge of Spiritual Beings and of God Himſelf, while in a State of Innocence, than they can now in this

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Lapſed and Depraved Eſtate: For the Mind performs her Operations in the ſame manner: The Ideas: the Apprehenſion: the Reaſon, and the Laws of Reaſoning are the ſame: All the Difference is, that we proceed not ſo readily without Obſtruction, nor ſee ſo clearly without Prejudice, as in a State of Innocence.

This Difference is however no Argument that our Facultys reach further in a State of Innocence, nor can any thing be inferred from it, but this, that all Infidelity ſprings from thoſe Evil Affections, which darken the Underſtanding, that it cannot apprehend aright, and pervert the Will, that it ſhall not aſſent to the Truth propoſed, nor to the Evidence brought to prove it.

Let theſe Men therefore ſuppoſe which way they will: either that *Reaſon* was *never* more *perfect*, and ſo deny the *Fall*, or that it was once more *perfect*, and ſo acknowledge the Scripture Account, this the mean while is certain, that it could proceed no further in the Knowledge of God upon *one* Suppoſition, than upon the *other*, that is no further than *it* hath done, or hath pretended to do excluſive of *Revelation*, if yet there was ever any Religion in the World not *remotely* founded on ſome *Original Revelation*, as 'tis not poſſible to produce any Syſtem of true Religion without it.

But if we will ſuppoſe *Religion* to have been conducted by the meer *Light of Nature*, we muſt at the ſame time ſuppoſe, either that the World was once in Poſſeſſion of ſome true Religion, or that by the *Light of Nature* alone Man

Man could not arrive at any true Religion; and supposing this, then I say, that nothing manifests the *Weakness* of this *Natural Light* so evidently, as the Looking into and Examining the *State* of *Religion* in all Ages and Nations, where the *Original Revelation* was lost and none since received. One Argument against the Being of a God hath been drawn from the *Want* of *Universal Consent*: a most certain Argument may be drawn from *it* against the *Light of Nature*: For supposing the Fact true, that there was no *Universal Consent*, or supposing it True that there was once, since the World was peopled, an *Universal Consent*: upon the *Former* supposition the *Light of Nature* was not able to discover a God: upon the Latter (as appears from the old Theology) it was not able truly to discover *Him*.

If we proceed to a further Examination we shall find, what is an undeniable Truth, that upon a supposition, that the *Light of Nature* had ever been able to teach, or ever had taught a true Religion, it was not able to preserve it in the World.

Let the *Patrons* of this *Light* proceed upon any possible Supposition, still they must acknowledge the *Weakness* and *Insufficiency of it left meerly to it self*; and it must therefore be Absurd to make this *Light* in its *present* or *former* Condition, since the days of *Adam*, even before his *Fall* the sole Measure and Standard of Religion, exclusive of all other Assistance.

But to balance the Natural or acquired *Insufficiency* of the *Light of Nature*, we may learn se-

ſecondly from the account given of it in the *Scriptures* eſpecialy,

2. Its *Capacity* to extend its Views upon proper Aſſiſtance and Inſtruction.

By its *Natural Inſufficiency* I underſtand the *Bounds* and *Limits* beyond which it cannot paſs, whether we ſuppoſe it in its *Original* Clearneſs and Perfection, or aſſiſted and improved beyond its Natural Strength by the Light of *Revelation*. By its acquired I underſtand that *Weakneſs*, which is contracted thro' the Corruption and Inordinate Affections of the Soul. Take *Nature* in its moſt perfect State it hath its Limitations: And *Revelation*, which *diſcovers*, cannot make us *comprehend* the great Truths, it teaches. The *Mind* of Man is not only *Finite*, and its Views are not only *Bounded* with regard to *Divine Objects*, but in its preſent State, while it dwells in the Body, it is conſtrained to act according to certain Rules, and thro' the Mediation of thoſe Organs, to which it is moſt intimately united.

Upon this Subject therefore it may be proper to conſider firſt,

1. What this *Capacity* is, and to what it extends. Secondly,

2. After what Manner the *Mind* proceeds in extending her Views. Thirdly,

3. The *Aſſiſtance*, *Inſtruction*, and *Information* it proceeds upon.

1. As to this *Capacity*, and the *Extent* of it, It is ſeated in the Underſtanding and conſiſts in

in the Improvement of our *Natural Light* according to the *Operations* of the *Mind* in this neceſſary and intimate *Conjunction* with the *Body*.

The *Light of Nature* therefore under the preſent Condition of our *Intellectual Facultys* may be conſidered with reſpect to the *Ability* it hath to diſcover *Truth* by its *own ſearches* without any Aſſiſtance from others, and with reſpect to its *Capacity* of receiving and acknowledging any Truths when duely propoſed.

As to its *Ability* to diſcover *Truth* by its own Diſquiſitions alone, this is a Caſe meerly *Speculative* and Imaginary; and however it may be diſtinctly propoſed in *Theory*, in *Practice* it will fall in with the other, as our Knowledge improves by daily Converſe and Inſtruction: All Knowledge is realy founded in a *Capacity* of Learning: and tho' in ſome Inſtances Men may be ſaid to work out things by themſelves, which, where it ſeems to be done, is only a more *laborious way* of Learning, yet they generaly arrive at Truth by a ſhorter way, and take that from the *Information* of others, which they have not Leiſure, nor are fitted by Education to examine *Fundamentaly* themſelves: Thus they act with regard to the moſt important Truths of the greateſt and moſt univerſal Concern, and when theſe are truly ſtated, and juſtly propoſed, the Mind diſcerns the Evidence, and aſſents, as firmly, as if every Man had Originaly ſearched and examined for himſelf.

The *Light of Nature* therefore with reſpect to *Knowledge* is not ſo much an *Ability* of it ſelf

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Originaly to *discover*, as a *Capacity* to *receive* it, when *discovered*. This ever since our first Parents, who were created perfect in Understanding as well as Stature, and were at once illuminated with all Necessary Knowledge, this ever since is the Case of all the Sons of *Adam*: They learn from others what must require unspeakable Pains to work out by themselves. And it is a just *Sarcasm* on the Vanity of Men, because a true Account of their Ignorance, what *Zophar* here adds concerning those bold Intruders into the Secrets of God, who presume to examine and search his Ways. [a] *For vain Man would be Wise, tho' Man be born like a Wild Asse's Colt.*

It may possibly be objected, that Man is capable by his own Reason alone to make out certain Truths, and to come to certain Conclusions: For in some Cases what one makes out to another, that other is able to make out to himself, as in *Mathematical* Demonstrations.

But I answer first, Here is some previous Fundamental Knowledge supposed, and the whole Process in these, as in any other natural Conclusions, is formed upon some *first* and *general Principles*, which Men agree in as fully, as in their most *simple Ideas*.

I answer secondly, that the Question is not concerning *meer Natural Knowledge*, but concerning the *Extent* of our *Knowledge* even to things *Supernatural*: And it is in this Respect we are to consider the *Capacity* we have of raising our Views above Material Objects, and

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[a] Job XI. 12.

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extending our Knowledge beyond this Visible World.

This shews its *Extent*, and comprehends the Knowledge, we have of GOD both *Natural* and *Revealed*: It takes in all those Truths, which belong to *Natural Religion*, as contradistinguished to *Revealed*, and all those Truths, which, strictly speaking are known by *Revelation* only: The manner of apprehending is in both Cases the same: We understand the Propositions according to the same Rules of Interpretation in both, and judge of the Proof by the same Rules, as in any other Case we judge of the Nature, Clearness and sufficiency of the Evidence.

For a further and more distinct Explication therefore of this Capacity we may consider, Secondly,

2. After what manner the Mind proceeds in extending its Views.

This leads us to the Operation of our Minds with respect to things of a Spiritual and Invisible Nature in what manner it apprehends them, and in what manner we express our Conceptions of them, especialy, when we speak of GOD with regard to his *Essence*, his *Existence*, and his *Attributes*, which are *Articles* of *Natural Religion* as well, as *Revealed*, and with regard to *those Relations*, under which the *whole* GODHEAD subsists in a most Incomprehensible manner, and to those other *Mysterys* also, which are *Articles* of *Revelation* only.

GOD hath given us no new *Facultys*, by which we may apprehend, nor hath He taught us a

New Language, in which we may expreſs theſe *Myſterys*; and however all Truths concerning the Divine Nature are to be *Spiritualy diſcerned*, that is in a manner ſuitable to their Tranſcendent Excellency, yet we muſt ſpeak of them in the Language of Men, and GOD Himſelf in declaring them condeſcends alſo to our manner of Speech and Apprehenſion.

For the Mind of Man, as I have ſpoken at large, proceeds according to certain and ſettled Laws in all its Operations founded upon thoſe *Ideas*, which are the ground Work, and Materials of all its Knowledge; and therefore it cannot form any new Conceptions, nor extend its Views without the Help of its firſt *Ideas*. All its *Ideas* are Originaly impreſſed from ſenſible Objects, and 'tis the Employment of the Mind to ſort them under their ſeveral *Claſſes*, and according to all their various *Relations*, out of which, as from the Letters of an *Alphabet*, are formed Endleſs *Combinations*: In this Proceſs it conſiders them either as the *firſt* and Immediate *Images* of Material Objects, or as the *Symbols*, and *Secondary* Repreſentations of Objects not ſubject to our Senſes, and no otherways to be conceived, than by the Mediation of thoſe *Ideas*, which are ſubſtituted to expreſs them to us; and accordingly ſo far, as we can frame any Conceptions of the Divine BEING and his Attributes, they are drawn from thoſe Perceptions, we have of all Excellency and Goodneſs obſerved in our ſelves and the World about us.

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The Compaſs of meer *Natural* Knowledge is very narrow, and ſtrictly ſpeaking, confined within the Verge of this World alone: Here that boaſted *Maxim*, if any where, is true, that *we have Knowledge no further than we have Ideas*, and if we could not extend and accommodate our *Ideas* of *Material* Objects to things *Spiritual* and *Divine*, we muſt be ſhut up within this Viſible World, and all our Knowledge would terminate with our Sight, and the reſt of our Senſes.

But there is in the Soul a Power of enlarging its Views, and extending them to another World according to the Images and Language, in which things *Spiritual* and *Supernatural* are offered to our Underſtanding; and what we cannot have proper, immediate and direct *Ideas* of, we are taught to form the beſt Conceptions, we can, by conſidering the *Analogy*, *Proportion*, and *Correſpondence*, which our Senſible *Ideas*, and manner of thinking bear to thoſe things, of which we could otherwiſe form no Notion or Conception at all.

The Exerciſe of our Intellectual Facultys in the higheſt and moſt eminent Degree is placed, but very erroneouſly, in a fancied *Abſtraction* of the Mind from all material Objects; whereas it realy conſiſts in the *Operation* of the Mind upon theſe *ſecondary Ideas*, or Compariſons thus applied to things *Spiritual*, and from this Contemplation of them, and raiſing our Thoughts by this Aſcent unto them the *Knowledge*, we ſo obtain, is called *Speculative*.

This *Speculation* is not the bare looking forth, and caſting up our Eyes to Supernatural Truths, but it is forming the beſt Conceptions we can of them, and then conſidering them under thoſe determinate Notions and Conceptions: If *Abſtraction* be thought neceſſary to form theſe Conceptions, yet this *Abſtraction* is not the removing our Thoughts from all *Material Objects* and *Senſible Ideas*, but the transferring the general *Notions* we form of all Excellency, Virtue and Goodneſs to the ſame Qualitys conceived in Supernatural Beings: And as our beſt Notions of Excellency, Wiſdom and Goodneſs are firſt derived from our Worldly *Ideas*, we can never ſeparate theſe Notions from them, ſo as to think and reaſon without them, tho' they may be exalted and applied to Beings far above us, and even to GOD *Himſelf*. Thus we apply our *Abſtracted* Notions of all Perfection, Intellectual, Natural and Moral unto GOD, but tho' they are *abſtracted*, yet ſtill they are raiſed from our firſt Conceptions of Wiſdom, Goodneſs and Power, which we formed originaly from our Senſible *Ideas*. The Truth is, the *Abſtraction* is realy made, before our *abſtracted* Notions are applied: A meer Intellectual *Abſtraction*, and Conſideration of Truths, independent of, and ſeparated from all our *Ideas*, is impracticable in this our preſent State, where we are ſo ſurrounded with outward Objects, and all our Knowledge makes its firſt Entrance into our Souls by the Senſes. We need not diſtinguiſh here between the *Logical* and *Metaphyſical Abſtraction*,

ſtraction, ſince neither can be ſublimated into ſuch a pure Intellectual Conception, as hath no Communication with the Material World. All *Abſtractions* have a Conſtant reference to their *particulars*: They are the *Type*, the *Image*, and *Repreſentative* of them: and with regard to the ſeveral *Species* of Beings, they ſeem to conſiſt in the Notion, we form of the whole *Species* from the Obſervation, we have made upon *one* or *more* of the Individuals: *Humanity* is an *abſtract* Notion, both as it expreſſes a Benevolent Quality of the Mind, and the diſtinguiſhing Conſtitution of Man; but this cannot be underſtood, if it be perfectly disjoyned from its Subject, and however we may talk of and conceive things in the *Abſtract*, we muſt be underſtood in the *Concrete*, for as from thence it is taken at firſt, thither it returns at laſt. Thus *Abſtraction* in Moral Subjects is only the forming a general Notion of what is *Juſt* and *Good*, without actualy applying what is *Juſt* or *Good* to any particular or Individual Being, but *not* without conceiving at the ſame Time the Notion of a Juſt and a Good Man in the *Abſtract* alſo. For we can form as general a Notion of a Juſt and a Good Man, as we can of *Juſtice* and *Goodneſs* and *Man*, Separately and Diſtinctly conſidered. The Truth is, we can have no Notion, nor can we talk rationaly of *Juſtice* and *Goodneſs* without ſuppoſing a *Subject*, in which they dwell, and when we would repreſent theſe our *Abſtracted* Thoughts in a plain Intelligible Manner, we cannot do it more clearly than by repreſenting a Man in the *Exer-*

tiſe of *Juſtice* and *Goodneſs*. While we are *in the Body* our *Spirits* cannot act as if we were *out of the Body*: Purely Intellectual *Ideas* entirely *abſtracted* from all ſenſible Objects are an Impoſſible ſuppoſition, however Men have imagined, that in Divine Contemplations eſpecialy they can and do *abſtract* in this Manner, nay that they cannot conceive the *Things* of Heaven any other way. But this is not to conceive them at all, and in this way we ſhould not be able to expreſs our Conceptions of them: Whenever the moſt Rapturous and Exalted *Contemplators* endeavour to expreſs their moſt *abſtracted* Thoughts, if they do it *intelligibly*, they will find their *Abſtractions* were not ſo far removed from all Sublunary Things, as they imagined. In theſe Contemplations all our Conceptions are raiſed indeed, but ſtill they are the Conceptions, we have of *Sublunary* Excellence and Glory, by which we raiſe our Minds to that Excellency and Glory, which is *Heavenly* and *Divine*.

There is indeed an *Abſtraction* proper to Meditation and Prayer, but *that* is of the *Mind* from the Cares, the Pleaſures and Buſineſs of the World, [a] *When we ſeek thoſe things which are above, and ſet our Affections on them*, as upon Compariſon with all Earthly things they are far more Excellent and deſirable: *This* is the moſt rational, and nobleſt Employment of our Facultys, and gives us the moſt earneſt Deſires, and the ſtrongeſt Anticipations of Heaven,

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a Col. III. 1, 2.

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while *that other* forced and fanciful *Abſtraction* of our Thoughts and Conceptions, which is pretended to by ſome *Metaphyſical* Brains, and vainly attempted by ſome *Viſionary* Heads, too often ends either in *Enthuſiaſm* or *Superſtition*, or elſe in *Scepticiſm* and *Infidelity*.

The Cure for theſe Evils is to proceed in a *rational* way, and to uſe *Abſtraction* in a *practicable* and *intelligible* matter. Whatever *abſtracted* Notions of Glory and Excellency we have formed, they are ſtill formed upon the Inſtances and Examples of this World, and we cannot deviſe a further *Abſtraction*, when we would form the ſublimeſt Conceptions. The beſt way of conceiving them is to conſult the Conceptions that come from Heaven, and conſider in what Language, and under what images theſe things are ſpoken of in Scripture, and when we ſee that the Scriptures bring Heaven down to Earth, and condeſcend to our Notions and Language, we may be ſatisfied to ſpeak in the ſame way, and to carry our Thoughts to Heaven.

Abſtraction has no more to do in forming our Thoughts of *Heavenly*, than of *Earthly* Things, and is *practicable* in the *one* no further, than it is firſt practiſed in the *other*. The Knowledge and Contemplation of Spiritual Objects conſiſt not in *Metaphyſical Abſtractions*, but in ſuitable and worthy Thoughts, according to the tranſcendent Excellence of their Nature; Their Excellence is *poſitive* and *ſupereminent* in it ſelf; but then as to the manner of conceiving and ſpeaking of theſe *Spiritual* Objects, we expreſs

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our ſelves *Negatively*, when we would ſignify their Nature, as oppoſed to *Material Subſtance*, and by way of *Analogy* and Correſpondence to our manner of Thinking, when we would expreſs their *intellectual Operations*: Thus with regard to the Divine BEING, when we conceive *Him* a *Spirit*, we oppoſe *Him* moſt Abſolutely and ſimply to any *material* Conceptions: when we conceive *Him* as an *Active Spirit*, our Conceptions are formed upon the Notions, we have, of the Operations of our own Minds acting upon *Material* Objects, and from thence alſo we derive our Conceptions of the Divine *Attributes* in all thoſe Inſtances of *Wiſdom*, *Goodneſs*, and *Power*, which according to our ſeveral *Relations* we exerciſe upon the Objects round about us either in a *Phyſical* or *Moral* way.

From whence it is manifeſt beyond all Poſſibility of Doubting, that unleſs we concluded from our own Intellectual Operations, that we are endewed with *Spirits* or an *Immaterial Subſtance*, we could form no Notion or Conception of GOD at all, nor underſtand any Terms or Language, in which He could be repreſented to us.

The manner of Apprehending ſuppoſes both the Reality and our Knowledge alſo of thoſe things, which by way of *Analogy* and Correſpondence are extended to higher Objects, and made uſe of to expreſs them to us. Our Apprehenſion of *Spiritual* Truths can riſe no higher, than our Knowledge of worldly Objects and of our Selves in our own Nature, and our ſeveral Relations reaches, except by this

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Deduction of our Reason, that what is Excellent in us is more Excellent in them, and when we understand them according to their *Correspondence*, we must at the same time understand them suitably to the *Difference* of their *Natures*: For this *Correspondence* gives us a just Apprehension so far, as it holds, but we can know no further except in a *Negative* sense, and without it we could know nothing of them at all: The Glory of God as displayed in Heaven is set forth by the Similitude or Symbol of Light, and we cannot imagine a Nobler or Brighter Resemblance of it, and yet a Blind Man who hath no Notion of Light, cannot by this Similitude form any Notion of God's Glory, but whatever Notion, he has of Glory in this World, he must make use of and transfer to conceive the Glory of God.

For to close this particular of the *manner*, in which our Views are extended, The Assent of the Mind to any Proposition is founded on the Signification and Force of the Words, and directed by the Agreement or Disagreement of the Terms, and therefore the Terms must be applicable to the Subject, and express something True and determinate either Affirmatively or Negatively according to their Agreement or Disagreement. This Agreement is most clearly discerned in our most *Simple Ideas*, and *Spiritual* Truths are the more clearly apprehended the more they are expressed by, and the nearer Resemblance they bear to our *Simple Ideas*: So likewise in the same Proportion and Degree, in which we perceive the Truth of any

any Propoſition formed upon *Complex* Notions, where the Terms conſiſt of more *Simple Ideas* combined, we perceive the Truth of *Spiritual* Propoſitions alſo, as they correſpond more or leſs to ſuch Combinations of thoſe *Simple Ideas*, by which they are expreſſed.

But before we can argue from the Operations of our own Minds to the Nature of *Spiritual* Beings, and truly underſtand how to apply our *Ideas* of ſenſible Things to Things not ſubject to our Senſes, we muſt be convinced of their Exiſtence, and inſtructed, ſo far as we are able to apprehend, in their Nature and Eſſence: For tho' our Apprehenſion of *Spiritual* Beings ſuppoſes the Exiſtence of our own Spirits and the World about us, yet their Exiſtence depends not on our Apprehenſion, and we can know it no further, than it is *revealed*.

This brings me to conſider thirdly,

3. The *Aſſiſtance*, *Inſtruction*, and *Information*, we proceed upon.

This is no other than the *Inſtruction* of God Himſelf, who hath not left Mankind to follow their own falſe Imaginations, and to wander for ever in the Errors of their meer *Natural* Light, but hath recalled them to his *Original* Truth, and taught them to conceive rightly and worthily of *Him* and their *Duty*.

All that the *Light of Nature* can do is to arrive at a *Firſt Cauſe*, and conclude that *Firſt Cauſe* a moſt Perfect and Excellent *Being*: or rather *Reaſon* aſſents to a *Firſt Cauſe* either as ſoon, as it is propoſed, or as ſoon as we are con-

convinced by a train of Arguments, that such a *First Cause* there is: Otherwise, there would be no Necessity of proving it, and an *Atheist* must be an *Impossible* Creature even in *Supposition*; But then however the *Light of Nature* directs us to a *First Cause*, and upon Considering and Arguing convinces us so, that *we are without Excuse*, if we believe not, that there is an *Eternal* and *Supreme* BEING, the Creator of All Things; yet it is evident from the eldest Writings of Antiquity, that Mankind had not just and uniform Notions of true Excellency and Perfection, and consequently they were never agreed in the same common Sentiments, nor could ever entertain just and worthy Conceptions of this *First Cause*: So that however they agreed in the *Existence* of some *First Cause*, they differed very much in their Notions of his *Attributes*, and these were so very false and unworthy, that by them even the *Rites* of Religion, and the very *Notions*, as well as *Practice* of *Morality* were corrupted; For *Morality* bears a Natural Proportion to *Theology*, as to the Fountain, whence it is derived: This holds in *Theory*, and Happy should we be, if it held in *Practice* too.

Since then by the meer *Light of Nature* Men could never attain to, or persevere in one *Uniform Consistent* Scheme of Religion, nor agree in their Conceptions of the great and *Fundamental Article* of all *Religion*, the Divine BEING; we may infer that the *true Knowledge* of GOD must be *derived* from some *other* Fountain.

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It is generaly taken for granted, that every *Revelation ſuppoſes Natural Religion*, that is the *Being* of a God, and the *Dutys* owing to *Him*. This is true with Regard to every *Revelation beyond* the Truths of *Natural Religion*, but it extends not ſo far, as to exclude *Natural Religion* from being a proper Subject of an *Original Revelation*. That God revealed Himſelf to *Adam*, and left him not to work out the *Knowledge* of his Maker, and the great Dutys incumbent on him by the meer Strength and Workings of his Reaſon, like a *Self taught Philoſopher* is undoubted in *Fact*, and moſt probable in *Reaſon*, That God can reveal Himſelf to thoſe wretched parts of our *Species*, who are yet ignorant of *Him*, and teach them the true Knowledge of *Him*, and their *Duty* is not to be denied: and whether *He* inſpires one among themſelves, or whether *He* ſends unto them One from the *Chriſtian* World, whether *He* performs this by the Miniſtry of a *Man* or an *Angel*, or ſpeaks *Himſelf* from Heaven, it is every way an *Original Revelation* to thoſe miſerable People, and as their *Reaſon* awakens and is inſtructed, they find that theſe *Truths* are moſt Conformable and Convincing to it, and from their ſuitableneſs to the *Nature* of Man they are taught, that theſe are no other, than the *Dutys* of *Natural Religion*. So likewiſe, when God makes the great *Dutys* of *Natural Religion* the Subject of *Revelation* to Inſtruct Mankind in the true Knowledge of *Himſelf*, and to recall them from their Errors, the Truths of *Natural Religion* are indeed ſuppoſed, but they are ſuppoſed *not* to be truly known

known unto the World: Again when the *Apostles* preached the *Gospel* whether to the *Greeks* or *Romans*, and published it as a *Revelation* of those great Things, which had *been hid from Ages and from Generations*, they were *far* from supposing that Men were truly acquainted with the *great Dutys* of *Natural Religion*: So far from supposing it, that in preaching to the *Gentiles*, their first Business was, as St *Paul* declares, [a] *to open their Eyes, and to turn them from Darkness unto Light, and from the Power of Satan unto GOD.*

To this Purpose *Barnabas* and *He* preached to the Men of *Lystra* who were about to do Sacrifice unto them, when to restrain them, they [b] *rent their Clothes and ran in among the People crying out, and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things, we also are Men of like Passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn from these Vanitys to the Living GOD*; and *the Subject* of their *Sermon* was the *Religion of Nature.* In the XVII of the *Acts* [c] St *Paul* is preaching on the same Subject to no meaner an Auditory than the Philosophers and supreme Magistrates of *Athens*; and there He declared unto them, the *Unknown GOD*, whom they *ignorantly Worshipped*, and in the Conclusion tells them, that *the times of this Ignorance GOD winked at, but now commandeth all Men every where to repent.* The *Epicureans* who held the Doctrine of *Chance*, and the *Stoics*, who held the World was governed by *Fate*, were equaly ignorant of the true God,

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a Acts XXVI. 18. *b* Acts XIV. 14, 15. *c* v. 23, &c.

nor

nor do we find any other *Sect* was able to point Him out and declare *WHO HE IS*. In this celebrated *Seat* of *Learning* Human Reason wanted no Cultivation, and some Few Instances excepted, we find but very distant Approaches to the Truth: It argues the *Perfection* of *Natural Religion*, and the *Imperfection* of *Reason*, that *Reason* left *meerly* to it self hath mistaken so much in the *grand Fundamental Article*, to say nothing at present of its Errors and Defects in the *Moral* Scheme: *Natural Religion* is all *Truth* and *Perfection*, and *Reason* no sooner understands it, but it Assents unto it, that it is *Holy*, *Just and Good*: but there is a wide Difference between assenting to these *Natural* Truths when discovered, and being able without any Error to discover them. Whatever was the Cause of the first Mistakes, we find they were so early and so Universal, that GOD saw it necessary to correct them by a New *Revelation*, made first to *Abraham*, and afterwards deposited and continued with the *Children of Israel* his Posterity: And when he gave Mankind a fuller and more ample *Revelation* in the *Gospel* of his SON, It is evident, that in the Promulgation of it to the *Gentiles*, the *Apostles* first set them right in *Natural* Religion, before they proceeded to *those great Articles*, which in Contradistinction to *Natural*, are more peculiarly called *Revealed*. It is true therefore, that the great Truths of *Natural Religion* must be supposed before any other Structure of *Revelation* can be raised; but where Men are grosly ignorant they must be instructed, where they mistake,

take, their Miſtakes muſt be corrected; and when *Natural Religion* is once fully admitted, and underſtood, then Men are prepared for any further *Revelation*, it ſhall pleaſe God to give them. *Natural Religion* is not ſo called becauſe *Reaſon* is able of it ſelf univerſaly and truly to diſcover it, but becauſe when diſcovered, it is ſo agreeable and evident, that *Reaſon* muſt conſent to the Truth and Obligation of it, whether Men will obey it or not: That there ever was or is any Ignorance or Miſtakes about it, muſt be owing to ſome *Neglect* or *Defect* of *Reaſon*, and lay the Fault upon *either*, thoſe who maintain the *full ſufficiency* of *Reaſon* muſt be accountable for *Both*, eſpecialy if the *Defect* is any ways occaſioned by their *Neglect*: However the Caſe may ſtand, whether groſs Ignorance or Error prevail in any Part of the World with regard to *Natural Religion*, thoſe People muſt be rightly Inſtructed, and ſo far *Natural Religion* it ſelf becomes a *proper Subject* of *Revelation*.

Having thus far removed this Difficulty out of the way, it is not my Purpoſe in this place to enter into the *Neceſſity* or *Expediency* of a *Revelation*, nor into the Argument, that the *Scriptures* are that *Revelation*: All I ſhall ſay to the Firſt Point is this, That as *ſome* Truths cannot be known at all without a *Revelation*, ſo far as *thoſe* Truths are *neceſſary* to be known, a *Revelation* of them is alſo *neceſſary*; and as *ſome* Truths cannot be *ſo perfectly* known, nor the *Practice* of our *Duty* ſo *effectualy* enforced by the *meer Reaſonings* of *Nature* in this our Lapſed and cor-

corrupt eſtate, ſo far at leaſt a *Revelation* is *expedient* if not *neceſſary* on our Parts to be given.

It is not ſimply and in it ſelf neceſſary that God ſhould give us ſuch a *Revelation*, as is contained in the *Scripture*, any more than *He* was under any *Neceſſity* to purpoſe and preſcribe the Order and Method of our *Redemption*; yet when *He* had of his free Grace and Mercy admitted us to Pardon, it was *neceſſary* ſo far, as *He* expects the *Performance*, to acquaint us with the *Conditions*, on which He will accept us.

And for the *Scriptures* being this *Revelation*, it is ſufficient that *they alone* contain the *Covenant of Grace*, and with reſpect to *Natural Religion* that *they alone* of all ancient Writings do give us a Juſt, Uniform, and Conſiſtent account of the *Divine Being* delivered by *Himſelf*, and that no other Writings do deliver a true and worthy Account of *Him*, but as they agree with the *Scriptures*.

And ſince God alone can teach us to conceive worthily, and to believe rightly of *Him*, we may without further Controverſy conclude, that the *Scriptures* are his *Revelation*, in which God has manifeſted *Himſelf* to the World ſo far, as we are able to apprehend the Divine Nature, and to form any true Conceptions of his Incomprehenſible Eſſence. As *ſuch* they are received by *thoſe*, with whom our Immediate Controverſy lies, and in the Diſpute between us we uſe *them* as our *Common Authority*.

That God did *Originaly* reveal Himſelf to the World in a Viſible and Audible manner, I have already obſerved as an Hiſtorical Fact, as alſo,

alſo, that the Degeneracy of the World at firſt was owing more eſpecialy to the Loſs of that *Original Revelation*, which alone could ſtemm the Corruption, while the Truths of it were gradualy defaced, till there were hardly any Print or Traces of them remaining, except in the depraved and perverted *Rites* of *Religion*.

What this *Original Revelation* was we may learn from the Divine Communications with *Adam* and *Noah*, and tho' at the time of *Abraham* the World was Univerſaly run into *Idolatry*, yet they ſeemed not *utterly* to have loſt the Knowledge of the *true* God; But afterwards in the Days of *Moſes*, *when the Iniquity of the Amorites was full*, and the Knowledge of the true God hardly remained, but with the Children of *Iſrael*, then God ſaw fit to preſerve *Religion* by a *Written*, as before He had taught it by an *Oral Revelation*; And this Method, the *Oral* being ſtill preſerved in the *Written*, hath been continued ever ſince under all his *Diſpenſations*.

For this Reaſon, even becauſe of Univerſal Error and Corruption the great *Dutys* of *Natural Religion* became the *Subject* of *Revelation*; and beſides thoſe great Truths, which could be known no other way, thoſe alſo, which were not rightly known, were taught by God *Himſelf* in a Manner ſuitable to our Apprehenſions, and every way worthy his Glorious and moſt Adorable Majeſty.

Thus we are taught in what manner to receive and underſtand whatever is affirmed of

the Divine Nature by the *Spirit* of GOD: [a] *For the Things of GOD knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of GOD*, and therefore all the Doctrines of *revealed Religion*, ſtrictly ſo called, are to be received as ſo many *Matters* of *Fact* aſſerted to be *True*, and as ſo many *Promiſes* moſt *ſurely* to be *performed*: and they are to be underſtood according to the plaineſt, and moſt obvious ſignification of the Words, in which they are delivered, ſo as to aver the Reality of the *Fact* affirmed in them.

At preſent I ſhall only add, that ſince it hath pleaſed GOD with regard to his *Fœderal* Stipulations and Tranſactions with Mankind as well, as with regard to his own *Eſſence* and *Attributes*, to *reveal Himſelf* in a *Language*, and under *Symbols* and Repreſentations borrowed from Men, we are to underſtand both the Doctrines ſuppoſed diſcoverable by the *Light of Nature*, and thoſe, which are ſimply knowable by *Revelation* only, in the ſame way of *Analogy*, and interpret whatſoever is *revealed* concerning the *Divine Nature* in a manner agreeable to his moſt Pure and Incomprehenſible Eſſence.

The fuller Proſecution of this *Subject*, concerning the *Interpretation of Divine Truths*, will properly fall under a further and diſtinct Conſideration; and therefore I ſhall paſs at preſent for a Concluſion of all upon this *Text*, to the *third* and *laſt* thing, which we learn from theſe *two*, the *Common* and the *Scripture* Account of the *Light of Nature*, which is *thirdly*,

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[a] 1 Cor. II. 11.

3. That

3. That under all poſſible Advantages *we cannot find out the Almighty unto Perfection.*

This Head is already drawn to a Point from the two former Conſiderations of our *Natural Weakneſs* and *Supernatural Aſſiſtance*, and there is no occaſion to dwell long upon it, when the more only we conſider it, the more undeniably we prove it, and the particular Conſideration of the *Divine Being* as Incomprehenſible, will fall under ſome of the remaining *Diſcourſes.*

I preſume, it will be allowed even by thoſe, who pretend to believe, there is no GOD, that upon *ſuppoſition* of ſuch a *Being*, they muſt believe *Him Incomprehenſible*: His being *Incomprehenſible* is indeed the very Ground of their *Unbelief*, and all the *Unbelief* of *thoſe* alſo, who deny the *Articles* of our *Faith*, is founded on the ſame Pretenſions, for they will not *believe* them, becauſe they cannot *comprehend* them, and tho' they acknowledge GOD to be *Incomprehenſible*, yet they will bring down and explain the great *Myſterys* of *Faith* to their own Level, till they have denied the *Doctrines*, and have either left no *Myſterys* at all, or if *Any*, *thoſe* more darkned and perplexed with their Abſurditys and Contradictions.

The beſt Notions we can form of a *Deity*, do riſe from the Utmoſt imagination, we can form of the higheſt Perfections *Natural*, *Moral*, and *Intellectual*, under the unutterable Conceptions of *Eternity* and *Infinity*; but till we can find the *Proportion* between *Finite* and *Infinite*, between *Time* and *Eternity*, and argue ſtrictly

from *Visible* to *Invisible*, and from *Compounded* to *pure Uncompounded Essence*, we cannot presume to argue what the *Divine Nature Is*: Our highest Notions of *Natural*, *Moral*, and *Intellectual* Perfections, by which we shadow out the *Power*, *the Goodness*, and *Wisdom* of GOD, are indeed *True*, but yet *Distant* and *Faint Resemblances* of those *Attributes* in *Him*: *They* are correspondent indeed in Kind, but to imagine *Wisdom*, *Goodness*, and *Power* to *be* in GOD, as they are in *us*, and *exercised* by *Him*, as they are by *us*, is highly Absurd. To add *Infinity* to the *Goodness*, *Wisdom*, and *Power* of *Men* is only to make our Imagination more Monstrous *still*; and as in *Men* these are Imperfect both in Act and Degree, to ascribe them to GOD is a Contradiction in Terms, expressing so many *Infinite Imperfections*.

Our Notion of *Infinite Perfection* is thought to be rather *Negative* in removing all *Imperfections*, than any ways *Positive* in declaring the *Extent* of *what* is indeed *immeasurable*: The Term *Infinite* it self, as it is a *Negative*, serves only to teach us, that GOD *is not such a One as our selves*, but *opposed* and *contradistinguished* to every thing within the Compass of our Knowledge.

But tho' *Infinite* be a *Negative* Term, by which we deny any *Imperfection* or *Limitation* of the *Divine Being* and *Attributes*, yet it realy implies a *Positive* Assertion of that *Being* and those *Perfections*, which are beyond all *Thought* to *conceive*, and all *Words* to *express*: What the *Psalmist* saith of GOD's Commandment we may in the

the most unlimited sense applie to *Himself.* [a] *I see that all things come to an End*: I have seen an End of all *other Perfection, but thy Commandment is exceeding Broad.* We see or can conceive a *Beginning*, an *End*, and *Circumscription* of all *created Nature*, but of God we can conceive no *End* or *Point* from *whence He Begins*: no *End*, no *Period*, where *He* can *End*: We can conceive no *Space*, in which *He* is *contained*: nor any *Expansion* which is *Commensurate* to *Him*: When we say *He fills all Things*, we speak but *improperly*, and do realy confine *Him*, who hath no *Dimensions*: *For* [b] *Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Him*: No *Space*, in which *Numberless Worlds* of the vastest Magnitude may be *poised* and *move* within their several and respective *Orbs*, can bear any equal or possible *Proportion* to *Him*: For all *Matter* and the *Space* or *Place* which *Circumscribes* it, must necessarily be *Finite*, and *Finite* in its *utmost* conceived extension cannot make the least *Approaches* to *Infinite*. So *great* is God beyond our Imagination of *Greatness*! according to the Declaration of *Elihu*, [c] *Behold GOD is Great, and we know Him not, neither can the Number of his Years be searched out.*

The *Mysterys* of his *Eternity* and *Omnipresence*, by which possibly his *Existence* is *best* expressed, swallow up and confound our Understanding, when we attempt in the largest

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a Psal. CXIX. 96. *b* 1 Kings VIII. 27. 2 Chron. II. 6. VI. 18. *c* Job XXXVI. 26.

ſtretch of our Thoughts to graſp and comprehend them.

We can apprehend *Him*, but according to the Facultys, *He* hath given us: We are forced to ſpeak of *Him* in the Language of *Men*, and when *He* ſpeaks of *Himſelf*, 'tis in the Language of Men: Even in *Natural Religion* we muſt confeſs, that GOD is *not*, as we are forced to expreſs *Him*: That *He* is without *Body*, *Parts*, and *Paſſions*: and in all theſe Inſtances of His being *Incomprehenſible*, we have taken the *Divine Being* only as *He* is exhibited by *Natural Religion*, and that *Revelation*, which teaches us that *Religion*.

If in thoſe further Inſtances therefore, which are *Doctrines* of expreſs *Revelation* only, we are not able to comprehend the *Manner*, *How theſe things can be*, this ſhould not ſeem ſtrange to thoſe at leaſt, who *acknowledge* and *receive* that *Revelation*.

For a Concluſion therefore all that in our preſent ſtate we are able to conceive and know, is *revealed* unto us: By this we may ſee, how *Imperfect* our *Natural Knowledge* is: we may diſcern, how it is *corrected* and *improved* by *Revelation*: And as we could not arrive at the *true Knowledge* of GOD without a *Revelation*, nor to any *Knowledge* at all concerning thoſe *Truths*, which are diſcoverable by *Revelation* only, it follows, that we can know no more of GOD, than He hath been pleaſed to *reveal*, and that our *Capacity* to receive his *Inſtructions* reaches no further, than the *Bounds*, it hath pleaſed *Him* in the Creation of *Man*, to ſet it.

As

As ſome Points are utterly beyond our Reach to *diſcover*, and could only be made known by expreſs *Revelation*, it is not poſſible for us to *diſcover* any one thing more *beyond* what is *Revealed*: We may as well affect the Power of Creation, as the Forming of one Notion or Conception beyond the Nature of Things *Viſible*, and the Accounts given us of *Inviſible*: All that the moſt *peircing Wit*, and the moſt *perverſe Reaſon* can do, is to deny or miſtake the *Myſterys* both of *Nature*, and *Revelation*, and when they venture to carry their *boaſted Reaſon* into thoſe *Depths*, which they cannot *fathom*, they make *ſhipwreck of their Faith*, and return either *Infidels* by denying it, or *Heretics* by involving themſelves in manifold Errors about it.

If we conſider the Uniform Doctrine of the *Church*, taking the great Points *revealed* in the moſt ſimple, obvious and natural ſignification of the Words, they are delivered in: and the Intricate Mazes, into which the ſeveral Denominations of *Heretics* have run themſelves by perverting them, we may from hence gather Strength and Aſſurance, that we are Right, and *Sound in the Faith*. And however the *Church* to obviate theſe ſeveral ſorts of *Heretics* hath been forced to uſe ſeveral *Terms* beſides *thoſe* uſed in the *Scriptures*, yet we ſhall find that *She* uſes them only in Order to defend and hold faſt *that Form of Sound Words*, and the very ſame Propoſitions which the *Scripture* Terms expreſs.

But this alſo will be the Subject of ſome further Diſcourſe.

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In the mean time it becomes all thoſe, who acknowledge a *Revelation*, and receive the *Scriptures* as the *Word of GOD*, to receive alſo what is *revealed* with all Thankfulneſs and Humility, not going, nor *boaſting themſelves beyond their Meaſure*.

God *Himſelf* is One great Incomprehenſible *Myſtery*: By all our ſearches we cannot find *Him* out, as in *Himſelf HE IS*: Nor with all the Advantages our Nature is capable of, *can we find out the Almighty unto Perfection*: He is *Infinite* without *End* or *Limitation*: Nor *Angels* nor *glorified Spirits*, tho' they do ſee *Him*, nor *we*, tho' *we ſhall ſee Him as He is*, will ever be able to comprehend *Him*: We can never come to any End of *Infinity*: while we are in the Fleſh we can only ſurvey the *Wiſdom*, the *Goodneſs*, and the *Power* of God in the *Works* of *Creation*, and the *Order* of his *Providence*, and the *Manifeſtation* of his *Mercy*, and all this but very imperfectly while *here* [a] *we ſee thro' a Glaſs darkly*, and tho' our Views will be enlarged hereafter, and we ſhall then *ſee Him Face to Face*, yet ſtill we ſhall be looking and ſeeing *further* and *further* for Ever: The *Perfections* and *Glory* of God will open in further Proſpects, and into larger Views unto all *Eternity*, For He is ever *Incommenſurable* as He is *Eternal*, and were He not *Incomprehenſible*, I may ſuppoſe our *Happineſs* could not be *Everlaſting*. He is ever a *Boundleſs* and *Inexhauſtable* Treaſure of *Knowledge* and *Contemplation*: What we know

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[a] 1 Cor. XIII. 12.

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of Him besides his Infinite *Perfections* instructs us that He ever exists in the most Simple and Perfect *Unity* of *Nature*, and as Himself hath been pleased to discover, in an *Eternal Association* and *Oeconomy* of the *Divine Relations* manifested in the *Scriptures*: He hath *revealed* Himself to us not only as we are his *Creatures*, but more especialy as we are *Sinners* admitted by his *Free Grace* to *Pardon* and *Reconciliation*: This opens a *new Scene* of Things, and God presents Himself to us under those *Relations* in the *Divine Nature*, and under those *Operations* according to the *Oeconomy* displayed in the great Work of our *Redemption*, which it is Impossible *for the Heart of Man to conceive*: For *the Things of GOD knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of GOD*: And [a] *no Man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any Man the Father, but the Son, and he, to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him*: or as it is expressed in St *Luke*, [b] *No Man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father, and who the Father is, but the Son, and he, to whom the Son will reveal Him.*

To conclude, If there were no *Mysterys*, there could be no *Faith* in the highest and most peculiar sense of the Word; and if we will bring down the *Divine Being* to our way of Thinking and Apprehending, as if He was *such an One as ourselves*, we shall by our own strength be able to reason no better then the *Heathen*, and when once we begin to think like them,

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a Matt. XI. 27. b Luke X 22.

we shall soon fall into their monstrous Opinions and Absurditys.

To a right *Faith* let us always joyn a suitable *Conversation, walking worthy of our Vocation, and as becometh the Gospel of Christ*, which alone is able to make us *Wise*, and to lead us *unto Salvation.* And therefore *unto the One Only Living and True GOD therein declared, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed as most due, All Glory and Blessing, and Adoration for ever. Amen.*

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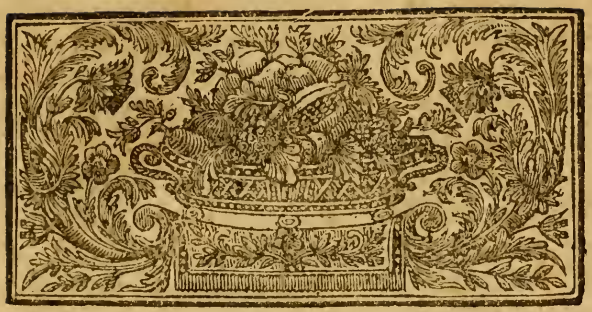

SERMON IV.

Preached *Mar.* 6. 1728-9.

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1 Cor. II. 11.

—— *Even ſo the Things of* God *knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of* God.

AFTER I had examined the *Principles* of *Hereſy* and *Infidelity*, I proceeded to conſider the *Strength* and *Compaſs* of our *Natural Powers*, both as *left to themſelves*, and as aſſiſted by *Revelation* to the utmoſt of their *Capacitys*. And the Reſult of theſe Enquirys is, that the *Light of Nature* left to it ſelf is not *ſufficient* to lead us into the

the Knowledge of GOD and our *Duty*: That nevertheleſs it is capable of being *inſtructed*, and taught the true Knowledge of GOD by *Revelation*: and laſtly, that notwithſtanding the *Revelation* GOD remains ſtill a moſt *Myſterious* and *Incomprehenſible* BEING.

We have ſeen in the Courſe of this *Argument*, that *Natural Religion* both as it reſpects GOD and our *Duty* had been loſt in the World, if it had not been taken into and made Part of the *revealed Will* of GOD.

We find indeed, that Man was not left to Himſelf upon his firſt Creation to ſearch and to reaſon Himſelf into the Knowledge of GOD and his *Duty*: The Divine Communications with Him in *Paradiſe* are recorded; and afterwards upon his *Fall* the further Purpoſe and good Pleaſure of GOD towards him is *revealed*: This *Revelation* hath been continued at *ſundry times*, and *in divers manners*, in ſeveral Parts and Proportions, till at laſt it was finiſhed and compleated by *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*.

If we compare the *State* of the World *with* and *without* a *Revelation*, and the *State* of Things under a *leſs*, and more *perfect Revelation*, we ſhall find that without a *Revelation* Mankind lay in Darkneſs and Error, and the *Light of Nature* it ſelf was almoſt extinguiſhed, ſo that what is recorded concerning the *Egyptian* Darkneſs and the Land of *Goſhen* in the Book of [a] *Exodus*, may fitly be applied to all the Nations round, *who lay in Darkneſs and in the Sadow of*

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[a] Chap. X. 22, 23.

Death:

Death: There was *Darkneſs* palpable, thick *Darkneſs in all the Land of Egypt, but all the Children of Iſrael had Light in their Dwellings.*

The *Light* ſtill encreaſed with the *Revelation*, and the more the *Learning* and *Commerce* of the *Jews* ſpread themſelves into other parts of the World, the more this *Light* began, tho' but as a *Twilight* in its dawn, to dart ſome of its beams, and to break in upon Mankind.

We commonly diſtinguiſh between the *Light of Nature* and *Revelation*, and more eſpecialy between *Natural Religion* and *Revealed*. To diſtinguiſh thus is convenient enough, becauſe *Revelation* in the more peculiar and reſtrain'd acceptation, contains thoſe Points, whether of *Doctrine*, or *Poſitive Inſtitution*, which it was not poſſible for the *Light of Nature* to diſcover.

Natural Religion is looked upon as the *Common Law* of all *Mankind*, *Revealed*, as a more *peculiar Diſpenſation*, obliging *thoſe only*, to whom it is given, or, more properly ſpeaking, to whom it is propoſed, for it is at their Peril, if they refuſe it.

1. But then I would obſerve, that *Natural Religion* in the *firſt* View, ſuppoſed Mankind in a *State* of *Innocence*: In the *ſecond* it is founded upon the *Conſcience* they have of God and their *Duty*: the *Knowledge* of *Good* and *Evil*, and the *Conviction* of having done *Well* or *Ill* continualy riſing in their Breaſts.

Several Precepts of *Natural Religion* took their Riſe directly from the *Fall* of *Man*: In the *Decalogue* which containeth the *Religion of Nature*, pronounced by the *Voice*, and written with the

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Finger of God Himself, the *Negative* Precepts are all of this Kind; and when our *Blessed Lord*, who *first Published* it, did afterwards [a] reduce this whole *Law* or the *Precepts* of *both Tables* under two *Affirmative* Commands, which were *separately* mentioned by *Moses* in the Books of [b] *Deuteronomy* and [c] *Leviticus*, concerning the *Love of* God and our *Neighbour*, He restored Religion, as it were, to its first and most perfect State, suitable to that *renovation* of *Mind*, that *Purity* and *Perfection* of Manners which are taught and required by the *Gospel*.

2. Secondly I would observe that *Natural Religion* especialy as Man is now the *Subject* of it, owes its Perfection to *Revealed*, both as the *Precepts* are more *clearly* delivered, as the Common *Motives* and *Principles* of Duty are more *strongly* enforced, and particularly, as several *Motives* and *Principles* of Obedience are *entirely revealed*: Some of these are suitable to the *Natural* Notions, Mankind hath, of *Rewards* and *Punishments*, and *Immortality*: Some of them are *peculiar* to the *Gospel*, and entirely drawn from the Method and Oeconomy of Man's Redemption by *Christ Jesus*.

3. Thirdly, we may observe, that there is no *Opposition*, much less *Contradiction*, between *Natural* Religion and *Revealed*: That both consider *Man* in his Relation to God: One as His *Creature*; the Other, as a *Sinner*, invited and restored to Grace; Under this double Consider-

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a Matt. XXII. 37, 39. Luke X. 27. *b* Chap. VI. 5. *c* Chap. XIX. 18.

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ration of Mankind we see the *Connection* between *Natural* Religion and *Revealed*: That *Revealed* is a *Superstructure* upon the Foundation of *Nature*: With reference to God declaring more distinctly *what He is*, and in *what manner He acts* towards us: With reference to *Us* and our *Duty* it is perfective of our Nature, and of every Virtuous Principle in the Mind of Man: And as *Natural* Religion now makes a part of *Revealed*, we can take a View of the entire *Model* at once, and behold the whole *Fabric* rise with equal Strength and Beauty, till it reacheth from Earth to Heaven-

4. *Revealed* Religion, as Contradistinguished to *Natural*, containeth all those Points, which it is impossible for the Thought of Man to discover, or come to the Knowledge of any other way: *Such* are the *Existence* and *Nature* of *Angels*: The several *Prophecys* concerning Future Events: The *Purpose* and *Counsel* of God in the Redemption of the World: The *Execution* of that Purpose: The *Reconciliation* of his *Mercy* and *Justice* in the great *Satisfaction* for *the Sins of the whole World*: And in the opening of this *Scene* are discovered the great *Mysterys* of the God-Head: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost concurring and co-operating in the Salvation of Mankind, together with those great and sublime Truths relating to each of these Divine *Persons*: All these, and more particularly Those concerning the Son the Second Person of this Glorious *Trinity* in his *Incarnation* and *Birth*: the *Distinction* of the *Natures*, and the *Unity* of *Person*: his *Eternal* and

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Temporal Generation, are moſt Eminently the *Doctrines* of *Revelation.*

I have made this Deduction for our more orderly Proceeding, till from the *Loweſt* we riſe to the *Higheſt* Points of our Religion. And here again I muſt

1. Obſerve firſt, That whatever God pronounces by *Himſelf*, or by the Miniſtry of Men is truly and properly a *Revelation* from *Him*; ſo *Natural* Truths, as propoſed by *Him*, become Part of *revealed* Religion.

2. Tho' every Thing, that comes in this Manner from God, may be called His *Revelation*, yet ſome Points are *Plain* in all reſpects, and ſome again are leſs *Myſterious* than others: Thoſe that are *plain* are the Precepts of the *Decalogue* and many *Poſitive Inſtitutions* given by *Moſes*, only with Reſpect to ſuch *Inſtitutions*, tho' what is *Commanded* be exceeding *plain*, yet the *reaſon* of the *Command* is not always *plain*, but for all that, becauſe it comes from God, it muſt be obeyed: The leſs *Myſterious* Points are *ſuch* as relate to *Angels* and our ſelves: The greater and more Tranſcendent are *ſuch* as relate to God.

3. Thirdly I ſhall obſerve, that in Points of pure Revelation, as we could have known *nothing* of them, unleſs they had been *revealed*, we cannot know *any thing* of them further than they are *revealed*; This is a moſt evident Propoſition, and till any Perſon is hardy enough to deny it I ſhall not ſtay to prove it. Whether ſo much is *revealed*, as our preſent Facultys are capable of receiving is a Queſtion, which may ſerve to exerciſe the Wits and Sagacity of Men;

Men; but that we cannot imagine any Point *beyond* what is *revealed* is, as undeniable, as that, with reference to the Univerſe we cannot form to ourſelves any *Idea*, *Notion*, or *Conception* beyond the Verge of Created Nature. If therefore there be *ſome* Truths, which cannot be known at all without *Revelation*, and can be known no *further*, than they are *revealed*, then all Attempts to account for, and unravel the *Myſterious* Parts of *Revelation* are vain, and only fit to raiſe ſo many *Hereſys* upon ſo many diſſonant and precarious *ſuppoſitions*, according to every different *Hypotheſis*, which the wayward Wit of *Heretics* and *Unbelievers* hath in all Ages invented in direct Contradiction to the *Apoſtle*'s Aſſertion. *The Things of GOD knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of GOD.*

Every *Hereſy* demonſtrates the Truth of this Poſition, while the *Inventors* and *Maintainers* of them affect to be *wiſe above what is written*, and preſume to know the *Things of GOD* beyond what is *revealed*, eſpecialy when they preſume to determine *What is*, and *What is Not* the *Point revealed*, in full *Contradiction* to the expreſs Words of the *Revelation.*

Thus the *Arians* denying the *Divinity* of the SON in the proper ſenſe, and of the HOLY GHOST in any ſenſe at all, and taking upon themſelves to determine in *what* ſenſe the SON is aſſerted to be GOD, that is in *ſuch* a ſenſe, as proves Him a *Creature*, have by this vain Pretence to Knowledge, and by contradicting what the *Spirit* hath uttered, fully proved the Truth laid down by the *Apoſtle*: *Even ſo the*

Things of GOD knoweth no Man but the Spirit of GOD.

In my further Discourse therefore upon this *Subject* I shall first *explain*, and then *apply* these Words, as the Argument, I am upon, requires. And first,

I. For the *Explication.*

The *Apostle* is here speaking of the *Wisdom* of God in the whole Designment, Order, and Dispensation of the *Gospel*, which at the *seventh* verse he calleth the *Wisdom of GOD in a Mystery*, or the *hidden* and *Mysterious Wisdom*, comprehending the whole Work of our *Redemption*, carried on from the *Foundation* of the World thro' all the *Steps* taken towards it in the *Revelations*, *Institutions*, *Types* and *Prophecys* recorded in the *Old Testament*, together with the full and absolute *Accomplishment* of it by our Lord *Jesus Christ*, from its *Beginning* in *Grace* to its *Consummation* in *Glory*.

This hidden and Mysterious Wisdom is such, as referring to the Words of [a] *Isaiah*, he tells us, [b] *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor have entered into the Heart of Man to conceive the Things, which GOD hath prepared for them that love Him; But GOD hath revealed them unto us by the Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all Things, yea the Deep Things of GOD. For what Man knoweth the Things of a Man, save the Spirit of a Man, that is in him? Even so the Things of GOD knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of GOD.*

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a Isai. LXIV. 4. b 1 Cor. II. 9, 10, &c.

This

This excellent Paſſage will afford us a further Conſideration for the *Divinity* and *Diſtinction* of the HOLY GHOST: Here I take it only as an Argument to prove, that Men *cannot know the Things of GOD*, that is the deep and *Myſterious things*, unleſs they be *revealed*: For as one Man knows not the Thoughts of another's Heart, much leſs can any Man know the *Counſel* of GOD, and the *Myſterys* and *Secrets* belonging to the *Divine Nature*, unleſs they be *revealed* unto him.

This *Revelation* is peculiarly attributed to the HOLY GHOST: It was committed to our *Bleſſed Saviour*, while *He* acted *miniſterialy*, and diſcharged his *Prophetic Office* upon Earth, tho' *then eſſentialy united* to the *Father*, and the *Holy Spirit*, [a] *For GOD giveth not the Spirit by Meaſure unto Him*; and after his *Aſcenſion He revealed Himſelf* in a peculiar manner to this *Apoſtle from* [b] *Heaven*, but as this *Revelation* was to be one *Peculiar* [c] *Office* of the HOLY GHOST, after our *Bleſſed Lord* was gone away, the *Apoſtle* ſpeaketh in this place of the *Revelation* by the *Holy Spirit*, which *Himſelf* alſo, beſides his [d] ſpecial *Revelations*, received, as did the *other Apoſtles*, from the HOLY GHOST.

The Compariſon here uſed is very appoſite and proper to illuſtrate the Truth of this Aſſertion, and to convince us, that as the *Thoughts* of Men are known only to their own *Hearts*, and no Man knoweth the *Secrets* of another's

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a John III. 34. *b* Acts IX, XXII, XXVI. *c* John XVI, &c. *d* 2 Cor. XII.

Breaſt, unleſs they be diſcloſed by *Speech* or *Writing*, or ſome other *Sign*, it is impoſſible for us to *know the Things of GOD*, unleſs they be *revealed* to us by *His Holy Spirit*. *The Things of GOD knoweth no One, but the Spirit of GOD* excluſive of all Men, and in Contradiſtinction to all created Beings; and the *Things of GOD*, his *Purpoſe* and *Counſel*, concerning which the *Apoſtle* is here chiefly ſpeaking, include in them *thoſe Divine Relations*, which *conſtitute* and *diſtinguiſh* the *Three ſeveral Perſons* ſubſiſting in the GODHEAD; Theſe, as well as the *Purpoſe* and *Counſel* of GOD for the Accompliſhment of our *Redemption*, are properly called in this place the *Things of GOD*. For this great *Work* in every *Step*, and throughout the whole *Proceſs* of it, continualy preſents unto us the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. In this View the Words are to be underſtood, and may be thus rendered in the moſt literal Form. *For who of Men knoweth the Things of a Man, ſave the Spirit of a Man, that is in Him? even ſo the Things of GOD no One knoweth, but the Spirit of GOD.*

II. After this ſhort *Explication*, in *applying* this Aſſertion of the *Apoſtle*, as the Argument, I am upon, requireth, and as the *Apoſtle* himſelf afterwards *applieth* it to the *Natural Man*, and his *Natural Light* compared with the *Spiritual*, I ſhall lay down theſe *three Propoſitions*.

1. That whatever we know of GOD and our Duty by the *Light of Nature*, we know the ſame more perfectly by *Revelation*.

2. That

2. That where we have ſome Knowledge without *Revelation*, we muſt nevertheleſs believe according to what is *revealed*.

3. Where we have no Knowledge at all without *Revelation*, we are obliged to take the *Points*, *Doctrines* and *Articles* exactly and preciſely, as they are *revealed*.

1. The firſt Propoſition is, That whatever we know of God and our Duty by the Light of Nature, we know the ſame more perfectly by Revelation.

With regard to this it hath been acknowledged, that by the Light of Nature we can arrive at a *Firſt Cauſe*, and conceive Him alſo a moſt Perfect and Excellent Being; But then Mankind, when they had loſt their *Original* Knowledge of God, ſoon loſt all true and worthy Conceptions of *Him*, and without a Revelation were not able to recover them. This we inſiſt upon as Notorious in Fact, from the ſtate of Religion in all the World, where a ſubſequent Revelation was not given, as high as *Abraham* even down to our *Saviour*'s Coming. Whatever they might have done is not the queſtion: They *might* poſſibly have continued in the Knowledge and Worſhip of the true God, as delivered and practiſed by *Noah* after the Flood: They *might* poſſibly not have fallen ſo univerſaly into *Idolatry*, nor have degenerated ſo baſely, as they did in *Morality* and *Religion*; but that they *did* ſo degenerate is *manifeſt* and not to be denied.

If any *Patrons* of *Natural Light* and *Religion* ſhall imagine, that notwithſtanding the *Darkneſs* and *Ignorance* of the *Old Heathen*, the *meer Light of Nature* is *ſufficient* to lead them into *Natural Religion*, they may pleaſe to conſider, that *now* they have a clear *View* and *Delineation* of it in the *Scriptures*, and that however they *reject it*, and *diſſemble* the Matter, they do indeed draw their Aſſiſtance from *Revelation*, and only *ſeem* to diſcover the great *Dutys* of *Natural Religion*, becauſe they perceive their Evidence, as ſoon as they meet them ſet in ſo fair a *Light*, ſo conformable to right Reaſon, that they command their *Aſſent*, and convince them of their *Truth*.

And thus the Scriptures fix the *Natural Notions* of GOD beyond what *Men alone* by their *meer Natural Light* had done, and carry the Arguments further, than the *Heathen* could do. This the Method taken with thoſe Fools, who affect to ſay, *There is no GOD*, doth plainly evince. For it is not enough to ſhow, that there is ſome Divine Being, but that He is not ſuch a One as the Heathen *Jupiter* for Inſtance: The *Heathen Theology* could never convince an *Atheiſt*; for while the *Philoſopher* was proving the *Being* of a GOD, the *Atheiſt* could prove his *Gods* to be *None*: Tho' the *Divine Being* may be proved *from Natural Principles*, yet *Natural Light* in this its darkned Condition could not purſue the Proof: this *Natural Darkneſs* is removed by *Revelation*, and upon the *plan* of *Natural Religion*, as drawn in the *Scriptures*, all Attempts to demonſtrate the *Being* of a GOD, and

and his *Attributes*, ſerve not only to convince the *Atheiſt*, but they are deſigned no leſs, as they are equaly adapted, to reform the *Idolatrous*, and *Superſtitious* alſo; and if the Arguments uſed are ſuch, as are fairly drawn from, and reſolvable into *Natural Principles*, we may ſurely uſe them, tho' we find them in the *Scriptures*.

For tho' an *Atheiſt* is not to be argued with upon the *Being* of a God from any Revelation as *ſuch*, yet proper Arguments may be contained in that Revelation, and ſo applied according to the *Principles* of Reaſon, without inſiſting at all on the Revelation: However, when once the great Point concerning the *Exiſtence* of a God is ſettled, His *Nature* and *Attributes* may be moſt ſurely known and argued, as we find them declared in the *Scriptures*, which we receive as a Revelation from God: For there is no Pretence for any one, that is brought to own a God, to deny, that God may *reveal*, or upon good Evidence, that He hath *revealed Himſelf*, eſpecialy when the Revelation muſt be confeſſed to expreſs the great *Truths of Natural Religion* more clearly and perfectly, than any meer *Natural* Writer unacquainted with that *Revelation* hath done; And when the Strength of meer *Natural Light*, and the *Evidence* of *Natural Religion* are ſo highly extolled and magnified, all, that can be inferred from our *Natural Powers* is *Not That*, which is deſigned, the *Nonneceſſity* of any *Revelation*, but *This*, That *Truth* is ſo *Congenial* to the Soul of Man, that he cannot without the higheſt Guilt re-

refuſe it, when it is duely propoſed to him upon ſufficient Evidence, and a Juſt Authority.

I have more than once obſerved, and 'tis of great uſe to obſerve it, as oft, as it falleth in our way. that God *revealed Himſelf even* in the *State* of *Innocence*, while the *Light of Nature* ſhone in its Native Strength and Luſtre; But ſince the *Fall*, when this Light burneth more dimly, and only ſome ſmall ſparkles of it in Compariſon do now appear, it is not poſſible, that Men ſhould ſee ſo clearly by it, as before: Both the *Medium* and the *Organ* are changed: The Eye is weakened, and the Air is darkned: We look now thro' Clouds of Luſts and Paſſions, and Inordinate Affections, and therefore there muſt neceſſarily ariſe ſeveral *Obſtructions*, which can only be *removed*, and ſeveral *Defects*, which can only be ſupplied by *Revelation*; and were the *Enemys* of it truly ſenſible of their Weakneſs, they would uſe it, like *Glaſſes* to help their Eyes, and as an Excellent *Perſpective*, which carrieth our Sight further, and ſhoweth the Object more diſtinctly, and diſcovereth ſeveral parts in it not diſcernable by the *naked* Eye.

Whatever the *Light of Nature* could diſcover, we find ſet forth to the beſt Advantage in the Writings of *Plato* and *Tully*: I will not now diſpute *what Light Plato* particularly might have borrowed from the *Jews*, nor how that *Light* might thro' various Channels, beſides his Works, be conveyed into the *Writings* of the *Roman*; but let the moſt *partial* compare their Writings, *Divine* and *Excellent* as they are called, with the

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Scriptures, and they must see, *how short* they fall of that *real* and *Divine Perfection* both in *Truth* and *Majesty* of *Thought*, and in *greatness* and *dignity* of *Expression*: How *doubtingly* they speak of some Points: how *erroneously* of others!

If our *Modern Infidels* in *Christian* Countrys have formed more worthy Conceptions of the DIVINE BEING, *that* we presume, and very reasonably, is *owing* even to the Revelation, which they *disclaim*; since otherwise their PARTS and ABILITYS do not appear to be *brighter* or *stronger*, than those of *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Cicero*, and some other great *Genius's* of *Greece* and *Rome*.

But this is a *Concession* by no means to be made them, for they seem not to have agreed in any one determinate *Scheme* or *System* of *Religion*, nor to be *fixed* in any thing but *Unbelief*. They boast of the *Light of Nature*, but will not follow it so far, as it would lead them: they pretend, that it is *perfect*, but their own Schemes shew at once the *Imperfection* of the *Light*, and the Depravity of the *Authors*.

Differently from these the great *Genius's* of *Antiquity* behaved: They were deeply sensible of the Darkness and Corruption of their *Nature*: The best, and wisest of them were still enlarging their views, and gladly laid hold of those imperfect *Traditions*, and eagerly attended to any *Notices*, which conveyed down to them the *Doctrine* of a *Future State*. In this View they entertained the Thoughts of the Souls *Immortality* with the highest Pleasure, and if it were an *Error*, they desired to *enjoy* it.

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But our *Infidels* are the Reverſe of theſe: They are ſo far from looking after, that they ſhut their Eyes againſt all Revelation: They affect to *doubt* at leaſt of thoſe Points concerning a *Future State*, which theſe *Heathens* ſo earneſtly *wiſhed* might be *True*, and will rather reject the *Morality* of the *Goſpel*, than own the Revelation that conveyeth it: They will not admit thoſe *Precepts* which riſe above their *Natural Corruption*, and reſtrain their *Natural Appetites*, as they call them: Otherwiſe there can be no Objection againſt what is *Good* and *Excellent*, let it come from *Heaven* or from *Men*, and *Heaven* ſurely is the moſt proper *Fountain*; It is evident therefore (whatever Suppoſitions we may make of other Cauſes) that their Refuſal both of the *Chriſtian Faith* and *Morality*, for the moſt part proceedeth from their Senſuality and Luſts: from a disbelief of a *Divine Lawgiver*, and the *Sanctions* of another World: And perhaps the trueſt Account after all is this, that the *Faith* is *denied* for the *ſake* of the *Morality* it *requireth*.

It is Faſhionable with theſe Men eſpecialy to extol the Perfection and Excellency of the *Heathen Theology* and *Morality*: and well they may, for the *Heathen* Plan is in many reſpects more *excellent* than *Theirs*: The *Heathen*, that is the more excellent of them, who began to be awakened from their Slumber, and to be ſenſible of the Weakneſs and Miſery of *Human Nature*, perceived upon juſt Reflection the *Original* Excellence of the *Soul*: they ſaw the *Wound*, and ſearched, tho' in vain, for the *Cure*: They proceeded upon what they knew, with a deſire

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to know more: Whereas our *Heathen* ſtop ſhort, and do either *fear* or *refuſe* to carry their Enquirys into another World.

But in Anſwer to the *real* or *pretended* Excellence of the Old *Heathen* Schemes, which the more Excellent they are, the greater Reproach they are alſo to our *Modern Unbelievers*; We own it to their great Commendation, that ſome of them have improved the *Light of Nature*, conſidered as *impaired* and *diminiſhed*, and have been directed by it in thoſe dark Ages much further, than Others: That they had attained to this Concluſion of *one Supreme Cauſe*: of an *Eternal Being*: of an *Univerſal Providence*: and were under ſtrong and lively Apprehenſions of the *Soul's Immortality*, and a *Future State of Rewards* and *Puniſhments*: That they expreſſed themſelves with great *Force* and *Beauty* upon ſeveral Branches of *Morality*, and formed great and noble Conceptions of the *Deity*: All this we own, and this their *Writings* do evince in many admirable Paſſages; But that they had attained to ſo *clear* and *determinate* a *Notion* concerning God and their *Duty*, as we are now able to propoſe abſtracted from the great *Myſterys* revealed, when the Matter is again conſidered, will not, I ſuppoſe, be pretended: And the *Excellency* of their *Writings*, when compared with the *Scriptures*, proves only this Concluſion, that *Whatever* we know of God and our *Duty* by the *Light of Nature*, we know the *ſame* more *perfectly* by *Revelation.*

I proceed therefore to the *ſecond* Propoſition, which is

2. That

2. That where we have ſome Knowledge without *Revelation*, we muſt nevertheleſs believe according to what is *revealed*.

This is clear from the former Conſideration; for we are obliged to receive all *Truth* in the *higheſt* and moſt *perfect diſcoverys*, that are offered to us; if therefore thoſe *Truths*, which we are in ſome Degree acquainted with by *Nature*, are more fully diſcovered by *Revelation*, we are obliged to receive *them* as propoſed more clearly and perfectly in that *Revelation*. Whether we believe the *Revelation* or no, we muſt receive the *Truths* of *Natural Religion*: if we will not take them upon the Authority of God in the *Scripture*, yet we muſt admit them upon the *Principles* of *Natural Reaſon*, to which they are made known, and therefore thoſe, who reject a *Revelation*, are nevertheleſs obliged to accept the *Truths* of *Natural Religion*, as they are *more perfectly* ſet forth and declared by that *Revelation*; for thoſe, who are Enemys to *Revelation*, are not at Liberty to form what Notions, they pleaſe, of *Natural Religion*, but are obliged to conſent to, and entertain the moſt *Perfect*, that can be diſcovered.

True *Religion* both in *Doctrine* and *Practice* is perfective of our *Nature*, and *Truth* is to be embraced, *wherever* it is found, and by *whomſoever* it is offered. The ſame high Pretenſions, which theſe *Patrons* of *Natural Religion* make to a Zeal for *Truth* in all their bold Enquirys, will oblige them to accept thoſe *Truths* of *Natural Religion*, which the *Scriptures* teach, not only becauſe *Nature* teacheth the ſame, but eſpecialy,

pecialy, becauſe they are taught *more perfectly* in the *Scriptures*, than they are by the *Light of Nature* in its preſent Condition. He that ſtoppeth ſhort by the way, and will not aſſent to the Precepts of *Natural Religion* thus propoſed, and required, is not that *free* and *impartial Enquirer* after *Truth*, he pretendeth to be: Sure it can be no Prejudice to *Truth* to ſuppoſe it *revealed*, when if Men could diſcover it themſelves in the ſame *Perfection* they would be obliged to receive it *excluſive* of *Revelation*: How far *Natural Conſcience* would induce an *Obligation* we have partly ſeen in a former *Diſcourſe*; and all the Difference as to the *Precepts* themſelves is, that they are not only the *Law of Nature*, but being propoſed by the *Scriptures* in the moſt *perfect* manner, as it becomes the *Divine Laws* to be, they are the *Law* of God alſo, and derive their *Obligation* not from the the *Precarious* Force of *Natural Conſcience* only, but from the *Uniform Authority* of his *Commands*; But becauſe I would not ſo ſpeak or be underſtood, as if the *Law of Nature*, and the *Law of* God were *two different Laws*, it will be enough to add, that *It* is the ſame *Law imperfectly* diſcovered by our *Natural Light*, and taught more *perfectly* by the *Word of* God.

It would be of great Advantage, if the *Patrons* of *Natural Light* would *ſpeak out*, and ſay, which are the *Truths* of *Natural Religion*, as contradiſtinguiſhed to *Revealed*. Is the *Immortality* of the Soul: Are *future* Rewards and Puniſhments? and conſequently a *Judgment to come* any Branches of *Natural Religion*? Are Fear

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and Shame, and Remorſe Natural Affections upon Guilt and Tranſgreſſion? are Joy and Complacency the Natural Reſult of Innocence and Obedience? If *theſe* be Dictates of Nature, and Inſeparable from our Souls, as Thought it ſelf, we are bound to attend to all theſe Truths in the cleareſt Diſcovery, and the higheſt Perfection. And if many Difficultys be cleared up, and many Doubts be ſatisfied by Revelation, concerning the Reaſon, Ground and Manner of theſe Things, this ought to be no Prejudice to the *Truths* themſelves: I will only add, that when the Enemys of Revelation ſhall receive the *Doctrines* of *Natural Religion* in that Perfection, they are taught in by the *Scriptures*, they will ſoon conſent to the *Superſtructure*, which Revelation raiſeth upon them: When they are perſuaded of a *Future Judgment* diſtributed into Rewards and Puniſhments, they will have no Objection to the Account, the *Scriptures* give us of it.

We may with great Juſtice inſiſt upon it, that the *Adverſarys* of *revealed Religion declare themſelves upon theſe Heads*: Whether they believe a *future State*? whether they can conceive and frame any *Syſtem* of *Religion* without it? whether they can, or how far they can diſcover ſuch a *State* by the *Light of Nature*: And then what Nature from within giveth them any Notices and Apprehenſions of they are obliged to believe, when more clearly *revealed*. If the *Light of Nature*, as it directed the *Heathen* World, doth not give us a clear Knowledge of this *Point*, and this *ſingle Point* be a *Fundamental Article* of *Na-*

Natural Religion, we are then obliged to follow *that Light* which ſupplieth the Defects of our *natural Light*, and cleareth up the Manner and Circumſtances of a *Judgment to come*.

As the general *Apprehenſion* is dictated by Nature, and Men, who have once entertained it, cannot eaſily overcome it: and as the determinate Courſe and Order of it cannot be known by our *natural Light*, we muſt be, without further Inſtruction, as the *Heathen* were, in great Doubts and Perplexitys about it, and live as they did in *fear* of *Puniſhment*, and *no ſettled firm Aſſurance* of *Happineſs*. The more an *Inquiſitive Mind* reaſoneth upon the *Common* Condition of Mankind, and ſearcheth into the *Cauſes* and *Conſequences* of the *General Corruption* and *Depravity* of our Nature, the more he will be *perplexed*, and the more gladly will receive *that Light* which can *guide* and *direct* him thro' all the *Mazes*, in which he was bewildered. So far as the Knowledge of theſe things is neceſſary to the *Practice* even of *Natural Religion*, Men are obliged to receive it, and ſince leſs than one fixed and determinate Perſuaſion will not be *ſufficient* to influence our *Practice*, which can never be *uniform* and *ſteady* under any *doubts* and *uncertaintys*, we are therefore obliged to receive theſe Truths, when *revealed*, as they have their *foundation* in our *natural Apprehenſions*, but are fully diſcovered by *Revelation* only.

This is the Duty of all *ſincere Enquirers*, whoſe ſearches ſhould be directed to find out the *Truth*, and not to raiſe *Objections* againſt it,

it, and under a *Pretence* of *ſeeking* for it, to *deny* it.

By ſuch an *Enquiry* and *Deduction* theſe Men may poſſibly find what they *inwardly* apprehend, and yet are *afraid* to acknowledge, That even in *natural Religion* ſomething *more* than God's *Goodneſs* is to be conſidered, and that they may be *puniſhed* for thoſe *Actions* and *Indulgences*, which flow from that *Corruption* of their Nature, which of themſelves they are not able to overcome.

Thus we may ſee, how theſe Enquirys lead us from *natural Religion* to *revealed* properly ſo called, and this bringeth me in the third place to ſhow.

3. That where we have no Knowledge at all without *Revelation*, we are obliged to take the *Points*, *Doctrines* and *Articles exactly* and *preciſely* as they are *revealed*.

By this I do not mean a *ſtrict literal* ſenſe of the Words in all Reſpects, but only ſo far a *literal ſenſe*, as they are an *Averment* of ſome *fact* or *Truth* concerning the *Divine Nature*, and the *Tranſactions* of God with the *Sons* of *Men*.

Thus when the *Firſt Perſon* of the *Ever Bleſſed Trinity* is called a *Father*, and the *Second* a *Son* antecedently to the *Incarnation*: when the *Second Perſon* is ſet forth, as the *Eternal Son* of the *Father*, with all the proper *Attributes* and *Appellations* of the *Divine Nature*, we are obliged to underſtand the Words, which expreſs this Relation, of a *true* and *proper Paternity*, and of a *true* and *proper Filiation*; and becauſe the whole

whole *Divine Nature* and *Attributes* are *totaly* communicated, we do therefore assert the *Divine Relation* to be as *Eternal* as the *Essence*. Again, when the *Son* with respect to this *Eternal Generation*, is called the *Only Begotten*, we are taught, that this *Relation* arises from the *same Foundation* in the GOD-HEAD, as it doth among Men: and that the *Son* is as truly the *Begotten Son* of the *Father* with the *whole Nature* and *Essence* of the *Father* communicated unto *Him*, as *Seth* was the Son of *Adam* with the *whole Nature* and *Essence* of *Adam* communicated unto him; But then because, as to the *Manner*, we cannot conceive of *Divine Generation* as we do of *Human*, here the *gross literal sense*, or rather *Conception* of the Words must be laid aside: The Reality of the Fact is only *asserted*: The Manner, How it is, is not to be *comprehended*, and it must therefore be understood according to that *Analogy* and *Correspondence*, which truly and clearly setteth forth the Truth and Reality of this *Divine Relation*, that it is Real as in Men, but Suitable to the *Incomprehensible Essence* of the *Divine Nature* which is ever *Eternal*, and ever ONE.

Guarding then against all *gross* and *vulgar* Apprehensions, that the *Divine Relation* between the *Father* and the *Son* should make *two Individuals*, as in *Adam* and *Seth*: and on the other hand against a bare *Metaphorical* Interpretation, as if this *Relation* was meerly *Figurative*, and *Allusive* only, we come to the Reality of the *Fact*, and then I say, that, with regard to what is asserted, every point of *Di-*

vine Revelation is to be taken in the ſame ſtrictneſs and Propriety with any Matter of Fact hiſtoricaly delivered: and where we can have no *Knowledge* without a *Revelation*, and cannot extend our *Knowledge* beyond what is *revealed*, we muſt take the *Revelation*, as it is given, in the moſt plain and obvious ſenſe, and for this plain reaſon, becauſe otherwiſe, ſo various are the Imaginations of Men, we cannot take it in any certain and determinate ſenſe.

In *Hiſtory* we make no Difficulty to aſſent to the *Facts* related concerning any *Famous Man* and his *Actions*, unleſs the *Facts* be contradicted by other *Hiſtorians* of equal Credit, but we make no Difficulty, where there is an Agreement of All, or if thoſe that differ, are manifeſtly *partial*, or on any other account not to be believed: And in *Natural Philoſophy* or *Natural Hiſtory*, as it may very properly be called, we aſſent alſo without any difficulty to thoſe *Facts*, which are aſſerted upon repeated *Experiments* concerning the ſeveral *Propertys* of *Natural Bodys*: In *Civil Hiſtory* there is no Difficulty in accounting for the *Actions* related, except that ſometimes the *ſprings* and *reaſons* of them are not known, and yet it would be highly Abſurd to Deny the *Fact*, becauſe we know not the *reaſon*, why it was done: And it would be but an idle and vain Amuſement to gueſs at the true *reaſon*, when ſeveral perhaps may be aſſigned, and we are not able to prefer one with any certainty to another: In *Natural Hiſtory* the *Fact* is certain, but the *reaſon* of it, further than the *outward Appearances*, beyond

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our Reach. That *such Effects* flow from *such Propertys*, and that the *Propertys* of Things are known by their *Effects* is certain, but that we do, or can therefore know the *real Essences* of *Things*, or the *manner*, how such *Effects* flow constantly from such *Causes* or *Propertys* no Man can reasonably infer: The various *Hypotheses* raised to solve the several *Phænomena*, and *Operations* of *Nature* are a full acknowledgment of the *facts*, and as full a Proof of our *Ignorance* of the real inward *Essence* and Construction of Bodys, and of the *Reasons* and *Manner* of their *Operations* in the several *Effects* they produce, and therefore we must *own* the Fact, tho' we cannot *assign* the Reason of it.

All therefore beyond this Conclusion, that each *specific* Body hath its own determinate and *specific Propertys* known by certain and uniform *Effects* constantly flowing from them, is meer Conjecture, and random Aim, which can never hit the Mark, and discover the *real Essences* of things, as they are in themselves: That *Gold* is a *Species* of *Metal* of *such* a *Weight* and *Colour*, *Malleable* and *Ductile* to *such* a *Degree*, is evident partly to our *Senses*, and further proved by most certain *Experiment*, which is only a confirmation to our Senses; but what are the *figure* and *texture* of its Parts we can only guess at, and could we certainly discover, yet we should still be puzzled to account why *such Propertys* do flow from *such* a *figure* and *texture* of Parts, and suppose we could from them account for the *Weight*, I suppose, we could not pretend to account for the *Colour* too!

If we are so much at a loss in *Natural Philosophy*, if we can realy see no further than to the *surface* and *outside*, but cannot pierce into *Essences* of things, why should we imagine, that we are able to see further into the *Things* of God, and account for the great *Mysterys* of the *Divine Nature*, when our *Bounds* are set, *beyond* which we cannot *pass*, even in things subject to the constant Examination of our *Senses*? We must take all these things therefore, the *daily Objects* of our *Senses*, just as we find them, as they are expressed and asserted to be by those, who have given us their *History*: It would be highly absurd to deny the *Facts*, or to bend or explain them to any *Hypothesis*, because we may fondly imagine, we can *account* for what in the last resort is not *accountable* for by us. And it must be much more Absurd to raise any *Hypotheses* for solving the great *Mysterys* of *Religion*, and to contradict the *Fact* asserted, because we cannot *account How* it should be *so*, as it is asserted *to be*.

In the *Scriptures* it is *revealed* that there is *One* God: That in the *Divine Nature* or God-*Head* there are *Three Persons*, so we are forced to call *them*, and must call *them*, till our *Adversarys* can teach us a *more* proper Expression: To each of these the *Incommunicable Name* and *Attributes* of the *One* God are ascribed in the fullest and highest Terms without any *Difference* or *Inequality*: That these *Three Persons* are set forth in the *Scriptures* under the several Names of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: That such *Acts* are ascribed to each,

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as do necessarily infer a *Distinction* of *Persons*, and at the same time such *Attributes*, as evidently prove an *Unity* of *Essence*.

To deny that the *Son* is truly and properly a *Son*, and the *Father* consequently to be truly and properly a *Father*, is to deny the *Fact* asserted in the *Scripture*; and this they do, who depart from the obvious and plain meaning of the Words, in which these *Divine Relations* are expressed. Again to deny that the *Name* and *Attributes* of the *One* GOD are ascribed without any *Reserve* or *Limitation* to the *Son*, even as they are to the *Father*, is to depart from the *Positive* plain Assertions of *Scripture*, which, in declaring the *Eternity* of the *Son*, declare also the *Reality* and *Eternity* of the *Relation*: And so concerning the rest of the great *Articles* of our *Faith*.

These, as they are proposed to us, are so many *Positive Assertions*, and must be received as so many *Facts* affirmed by GOD *Himself*. The plain and primary sense of the words convey these Assertions to us, and if we depart from the proper and obvious meaning we shall run on in a perpetual Maze of Error, and multiply different Senses without End.

Take the *Sabellian*, the *Arian*, and *Socinian Hypotheses*: each invented to *solve Difficultys*, and to *deny* the *Truth*, they will either of them show the Unreasonableness and Mischief so to depart from the *Native* signification of the Words used to express any Point of *Revelation*, as to deny the *Fact* therein asserted.

The *Sabellian* to ſecure the *Unity* of the God-Head denieth the *Diſtinction* of *Perſons*, and ſo interpreteth all that is *revealed* of the *Father*, of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghoſt* in a purely *figurative* Senſe. The *Arian* preſerves indeed the *Diſtinction* of *Perſons*, but not in the God-Head: Therein *he* alloweth *only One Perſon*, namely the *Father* to be God: He denieth the *Divinity* of the other *Two*, excludeth the *Son* from the *Nature* of the *Father*, and the *Holy Ghoſt* from any *Eſſential Relation* to *either*. Thus the *Sabellian* to preſerve the *Unity* denieth the *Perſons*: The *Arian* for the ſame reaſon denieth the *Divinity* of the *Perſons*, making the *Son* and the *Holy Ghoſt* as Diſtinct from the *Father*, as two *Individual* Men are from any *third*, and *each other*; but at the ſame time infinitely more *inferior* in *Nature*, than one Man is or can be in any Conſideration to another: even as *inferior* as a *Creature* to its *Creator*; for with reſpect to the *Divine Being*, there is abſolutely ſpeaking no *difference* of *Inferiority* or *diſtance*: *Whatever* is not of the ſame *Eſſence* muſt be infinitely removed, for there are no *degrees* of *More* or *Leſs* in *Infinity*, and no *Medium* poſſible to be imagined even by the loftieſt Expreſſions between God and a *Creature*; But this I ſhall more largely and particularly conſider hereafter.

The *Socinians* out of the *Zeal* for the *Divine Unity* abſolutely deny the *Preexiſtence* of the *Son*, that *He* exiſted before his *Incarnation*, and they deny any *Perſonal Exiſtence* of the *Holy Ghoſt* at all: Otherwiſe they own the *Divinity* of

of the Son as much, and in as full Terms, as the *Arians*; and indeed I cannot see, wherein the *Arians* have the Advantage by owning his *Pre-existence*, since with respect to *Eternity* Millions of Ages backwards bear no more *Proportion* than *two thousand* Years, and if there ever was a *Time* when *He was Not*, or, to avoid Equivocation, if from *all Eternity He did not Exist*, it is all one as if He had existed but *yesterday*.

Here are three distinct *Hypotheses founded* on the *same Common Principles*, and *ending* in the *same Common Point*, The *Denial* of the *Trinity*; and they are only three different ways of expressing the *Unitarian Scheme* without openly discarding the *Authority* and *Language* of the *Scriptures*. Each of these: The *Sabellian*, *Arian* and *Socinian*, accommodate their *Interpretations* to their several *Schemes*, and departing from the *Assertions* in Fact, assert *some thing else* in full Contradiction to those Assertions: *Each* of *these* must confess that *one sense* only can be the *True one*, that *two* at least of their *Interpretations* must be wrong: and since they *all*, and *each* of them contradict the common received obvious sense of the *Scriptures*, in which certain *Facts* are *revealed* and asserted concerning the *Divine Nature* and *Persons*, it is a good *Presumption*, that they are *all Mistaken*, especialy if we consider the Reason which carrieth them away from the plain Assertion, which is their Disbelief of divine *Mysterys*, and a vain Attempt to *Explain*, what is indeed *Inexplicable*.

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The *Rules* of *Interpretation*, ſo far as the great *Myſterys* of the *Chriſtian Faith* are propoſed I ſhall make the *Subject* of ſome further Diſcourſes: What I have now inſiſted upon is a *fundamental Principle* for fixing one certain and determinate *ſenſe*, ſince if we are at Liberty to underſtand any Aſſertion in *fact* after any *other* manner, than the Words in their moſt natural ſignification, and conſtruction do plainly import, we may run on to every *poſſible ſenſe*, which the Perverſeneſs or Wit of Man can invent, and conſequently we can never know nor agree in what is the Preciſe and Determinate Propoſition affirmed and propounded to our Belief.

There are only, ſo far as I can find, *three poſſible Exceptions* to what I have advanced upon this Subject of underſtanding the *Language* of *Revelation* in the moſt *plain* and *obvious ſenſe* of the Words, when any *Fact* is aſſerted, or any *Doctrine* propoſed.

And they are,

1. That it is *indifferent* what we believe in theſe great and *myſterious* Points, provided we entertain a *Charitable* Opinion of one another, and *whatever* we *believe*, *believe* at the ſame time, that *all* in their *different ways* may be *Saved*.

2. That we be *Sincere*.

3. That GOD is *better* pleaſed, and *more* glorified by *Variety* than *Uniformity* in *Religion*.

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1. For *Charity*. This Pretenſion hath been formerly made with reſpect to *Chriſtian* Communion, tho' it be only a Pretenſion in thoſe, that ſeparate from us: The Rule holdeth among *National* Churches, which *differ* in *Rites* and *Ceremonys*, but *agree* in *Doctrine* and *Government*, and ſo *Catholic Communion* may be maintained among all the *Churches* of *Chriſt*; but it doth not hold in *Differences* relating to *Communion*, where *ſeparation* is made from any *National* Church agreeing with the *Catholic* of all Ages, and therefore where any *Sect* or *Denomination* of *Chriſtians* differeth in *Doctrine* and *Government* from a *Church*, which agreeth with the *Catholic*, we cannot allow ſuch *difference* to be a Matter *indifferent*, eſpecialy when they break *Communion* upon that account, and ſet up another *Form* as of *Divine Right* in oppoſition to the *Form* which we poſſeſs from the *Apoſtles* for Fifteen Hundred Years, till this *Innovation* firſt appeared.

This is the Caſe of our *Diſſenters* with regard to the Doctrine and Diſcipline of the *Church*: and if we add their other Pretences of *Seperation*, as we ſhall find *them* equaly unjuſtifiable, we ſhall more clearly ſee the vanity of this Pretence to *Charity*, ſince *Schiſm*, or *Separation* upon *Principle* ſo warmly defended, and ſo zealouſly maintained is inconſiſtennt with the very Being of *Charity* and Affection. But ſuppoſing they thought, and I doubt not they truly think, that *we may be ſaved*, we are indeed much obliged to them for their Thoughts, but it is not a *Communion* of *Affections* only, which goeth

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ſtill further than a bare Charitable Opinion, much leſs a bare Charitable Thought of each others Salvation, which is required by the *Goſpel*, but an *Actual Communion* and *Fellowſhip* with one another, in *Oppoſition* to, and *Condemnation* of all *Schiſm* and *Diviſion*. This *Diviſion* thoſe *Churches* avoid, who profeſs *Communion* with the *Catholic*, and maintain it alſo with ſuch *Parts* of it, as agree in the true *Doctrine* and *Government*.

Again, where any *Sect* or Denomination of *Chriſtians* differeth from the *Catholic Church* in *Doctrines* ſo, as in thoſe Differences to require an Agreement of all *Chriſtians* as a *Condition* of Communicating with them, and theſe *Doctrines* are contrary to *Scripture*, ſubverſive of the true *Faith*, and in many Points downright *Idolatrous*, there we cannot communicate with them, altho' together with theſe ſinful Terms they *hold the Head* and *Foundation*; but tho' we cannot Communicate with them, yet upon their holding the *Head*, we do *charitably* believe they may be *ſaved* notwithſtanding their *Idolatry*, ſo far, as they do it *ignorantly*, and *without Conſcience of the Idol*.

This is the Caſe between the *Papiſts* aud *Us*: We cannot *communicate* with them, but we extend our *Charity* to them as far as we can, tho' they return not the ſame to us. Thus we fulfill the *Royal Law* towards all, who divide Communion from us, tho' we do not think this *Charity* ſufficient to juſtify all Differences in *Religion*.

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But if we consider this Pretension in a more general View, with respect to the *Belief* as well as *Communion* of *Christians*, and with regard to every *Heresy*, and every Form of *Infidelity*, we shall find it set aside by the XVIII *Article* of our *Church*, which *condemneth all those, who presume to say, That every Man shall be Saved In* (according to the Latin) *By* (according to the English) *the Law, or Sect, which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his Life according to that Law, and the Light of Nature.* The reason given is, *That we can be saved by Christ Alone.*

The Truth of this Decision upon the reason given is manifest; otherwise every Man might be left to the meer *Light of Nature*, and there would be no Occasion for the *Gospel* at all: or if we suppose, the *Law* or *Sect* is to be restrained to the *Law* and *Sects*, which prevail among *Christians*, then *difference* of *Belief* in the great *Articles* of *Faith*, and *separation* of *Communion* upon all unwarrantable Pretensions are condemned, as well as *those*, who defend and maintain them by this Position and Pretension of *Charity*.

The Point before us is concerning some *determinate Faith*, and with respect to this Pretension it will be enough to ask whether a *Charitable* Opinion of others will justify our selves, if we believe *wrong*, or if others, who do not believe *aright*, are in any better Condition for our *Charitable* Opinions, to show the vanity and weakness of it.

The utmost, that can be said, is, that we cannot set *Bounds* to God's *Mercy*, nor prescribe

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Rules to his *Grace*, that He may poſſibly extend his Pardon and Salvation to thoſe, who are Ignorant of his *Goſpel*, and accept of thoſe, who, when 'tis offered, do nevertheleſs refuſe it: But of the *firſt* we can have no Aſſurance, of the *laſt* we are aſſured to the Contrary, we ſet no *Bounds* to God's *Mercy*, at moſt we do but *confine* our ſelves within the *Bounds Himſelf* hath preſcribed. God hath always tranſacted with Men in the way of *Covenant*, and it is uncertain arguing from his *Uncovenanted* Mercys: To reaſon from his *Attributes* excluſive of his *Covenant* is alſo very *precarious*: For with reſpect to his *Mercy*, from which in this Caſe Men love to argue, *He* is for ever juſtified in giving Man a *Covenant* of *Grace*, and receiving him to *Pardon*, after he had *fallen*. We were reſtored in *Chriſt* as ſoon as we fell in *Adam*: And after the Flood we ſtill ſtood reſtored in the *Covenant* continued to *Noah*: The *Corruption*, *Ignorance*, and *Idolatry*, that prevailed in his Poſterity, are chargable upon themſelves alone for not attending to that *Light* and *Evidence*, which God had given them, ſo that in all ſucceſſive Ages *they are without Excuſe*.

But ſuppoſing the utmoſt Allowances to the *Gentile* World, what is all this to thoſe who are born within the *Pale* of *Chriſt's Church*, who call themſelves *Chriſtians*, and enjoy the *Light* of the *Goſpel*? Is it *indifferent* for theſe to receive a *Revelation*, or not? or to reject it, as do the *Deiſts*? or to differ from it, as do the *Arians* and *Socinians*, and every Denomination of *Heretics*? Is *Faith neceſſary* to *Juſtification*? and if

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neceſſary, is it of *that Latitude* to juſtify all, believe they what they will? To affirm the former condemneth the *Deiſts*, and all the Enemys of *revealed* Religion: To deny the latter overthroweth the Pretenſions of *all*, that differ from the *Faith*: For there is [a] *One Faith* and *one Baptiſm* into it. Thoſe who differ from this *Faith*, differ from the *Faith* here aſſerted to be *One*: Thoſe, that *differ* do *virtualy* condemn each other, and their *Contentions* with the *Church* are very *unreaſonable*, if they thought *Salvation* might be obtained in any *different* Scheme, unleſs they excluded us alone from all *Hopes* of *Salvation*.

Setting aſide therefore this vain Pretence, as if we ſhould be *Saved* in our *own* Errors, becauſe we are ſo *charitable* as to think, all others ſhall be *Saved* in *theirs*, we aſſert and maintain that *Charity* is the Neceſſary Companion of a *right Faith*; but we deny that it will juſtify us in a *wrong One*: To think and to hope *charitably* of all Men is our *Chriſtian* Duty, but *Faith* can be no Term of *Salvation*, if *all* Men *indifferently* in all Profeſſions may be Saved: Without *Charity* joyned to the true *Faith* we cannot be Saved, for the *Goſpel* requireth *that* [b] *Faith, which worketh by Love*; but ſhall we be *Saved*, becauſe we think, that thoſe, who *differ* from us, are in a *ſtate of Salvation*?

However this may be pretended by *ſome*, in the Mouths of *Heretics* and *Unbelievers* it muſt ſound very ſtrange and abſurd: The *Rancour*,

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[a] Eph. IV. 5. [b] Gal. V. 6.

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Virulence and *Malice*, which they expreſs againſt the *Doctrines* of the *Church*, and *thoſe*, who profeſs them; the *Rage* and *Cruelty*, with which, when they have *Power*, they *ever perſecute* the *Faith* of *Chriſt*, are *ſtrong Indications*, and *unanſwerable Teſtimonys* of the *Charity* they bear us: the whole method of their Proceeding: their *Zeal* and *Diſſimulation* in oppoſing the great *Articles* of our *Faith* may convince us at once of their *Ingenuity* and their *Love*; and their *Conduct* towards us may ſerve to *teach*, or what is rather to be choſen, to *warn* us what Treatment we may expect at their hands.

2. The *ſecond* Exception againſt underſtanding the great *Myſterys* of the *Goſpel* in the plain obvious ſenſe of the Words is the Pretence of *Sincerity*, as available not only to excuſe our Errors, but alſo at the ſame time to recommend us to the Favour of God.

Without entring into the Controverſy, as it hath been managed on both ſides the Queſtion, I ſhall rather chuſe to conſider the Argument in a more peculiar View as it is employed in the ſervice of *Infidelity*, and for a Foundation I ſhall lay down theſe general *Poſitions*. That *Sincerity*, like *Charity*, is required in a *Right Faith*, but will not *juſtify* in a *Wrong*: That *Faith* and not *Sincerity* is the *expreſs Condition* of our *Juſtification*, and therefore the ſtrict Queſtion is, whether our *Faith* be *Right*, *not* whether it be *Sincere*; or rather firſt whether it be *right*, and then whether it be *ſincere*.

Sincerity is not peculiar to our *Faith*: It *equaly* regardeth *all* the Parts of our Lives, and ſtandeth

eth in Oppoſition to all *Paſſion*, *Prejudice*, *ſelf Intereſt* and *Partiality*: It ſuffereth no *Mixtures*: it admitteth of no *Alloy*, and endureth not the leaſt *Byaſs* of Affection: It is joyned with *Simplicity*, and derived from GOD: and our [a] *Rejoycing*, like St *Paul*'s, muſt be *this*, *The Teſtimony of our Conſcience*, *that in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity*, *not with fleſhly Wiſdom*, *but by the Grace of GOD we have had our Converſation in the World.* To which we may very properly add the following Words of the *Apoſtle* [b] *for we are not as many*, *which corrupt the Word of GOD*, *but as of Sincerity*, *but as of GOD*, *in the ſight of GOD ſpeak we in Chriſt.*

There are in this Pretence of *Sincerity* as applied to *Hereſy* and *Infidelity* theſe two *Difficulties*, which deſerve the Conſideration of all, who rely upon it themſelves, or judge of others according to it.

The *firſt* is the very *ſuppoſition*, that in all the *different* and *oppoſite* Opinions ſet up againſt the plain and uniform *Doctrines* of the *Church*, *thoſe*, who hold theſe Opinions, are *Sincere* according to that *ſimplicity* and *Godly ſincerity* mentioned by St *Paul*. The *ſecond* is, That ſuppoſing *this*, whether they are *thereby* juſtified.

1. For the *firſt*, it is a very hard *ſuppoſition*, and cannot be *generaly* applied to *all* thoſe who embrace different Opinions, eſpecialy if we conſider that theſe different Opinions are ſo many Deviations from the *Faith*, and that St *Paul* aſcribeth all ſuch Deviation to the *Cor-*

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[a] 2 Cor. I. 12. [b] 2 Cor. II. 17.

ruption

ruption of the *Mind*: to *Pride*, to *Coveteouſneſs* and *Senſuality*; and then ſuppoſing the Deviation, the *ſincerity* is deſtroyed. Theſe all laid together are *Difficulties* againſt the *ſuppoſition* of true *ſincerity* in the *Oppoſers* of the *Chriſtian Faith*, which deſerve to be conſidered before it be granted; but *admitting* for Arguments ſake, and *ſuppoſing* the *Adverſarys* of our *Faith* to be *all* of them to a Man, every one *ſincere* and *upright* in his Heart, we are next to conſider,

2. What it will *avail*.

To ſay that *Sincerity* will recommend us to the Favour of God, whether we embrace *Truth* or *Error*, is a *Propoſition* of that *Latitude*, as not only to deſtroy the whole *Covenant* of the *Goſpel*, but the *Principles* of *Natural Religion* alſo, and to confound the *diſtinctions* of *Good* and *Evil*.

To reſtrain this to *ſpeculative* Truth alone will not remove the Difficulty, as long as Men may be *ſincerely* engaged in *Practical* Errors from a *wrong ſpeculation* of *Moral Truth*. The *Truths* of *Morality* are of a *ſpeculative* as well as a *practical* Nature, and muſt be conſidered in the way of *Theory*, before we enter upon the *Practice* of them, for the *truth* of our *Practice* will depend on the *juſtneſs* of our *ſentiments*: The *Opinions* that have been maintained, that theſe *Truths* are not *Eternal*, *Unvariable* and *Univerſal*, are *undenyable* Arguments, that *Error* may be followed in *Practice*, and that the *Maintainers* of theſe Opinions and *thoſe*, who *practiſe* accordingly may be as *ſincere*, as any that *differ* in *meer ſpeculative* Points.

If

If it ſhall be ſaid, that *Practical* Errors are Inconſiſtent with *ſincerity*, it is readily allowed, but this cannot be urged by the great *Patrons* of *ſincerity* againſt thoſe, who maintain *Virtue* and *Vice* to be of *Arbitrary Conſtitution* according to the prevailing *Cuſtoms*, *Laws* or *ſentiments* of *different Nations*. In this Caſe thoſe muſt be *ſincere*, who *practiſe*, according to their *beſt* Notions of things, and he that doth a real *Virtuous* Action, may according to the *Judgment* of his *Country* be guilty of a *Vice*, and his *Conſcience* ſuppoſing it *ſincere*, will *reproach* him accordingly. In what *ſtate* the *Religion* and *Light* of *Nature* muſt be upon theſe *ſuppoſitions* is eaſy to diſcern: Nothing can be *fixed* and *certain*, and the great Dutys of *Morality* ſhall no longer depend on their own *Eternal* and *Unalterable Verity*, but upon the *Cuſtoms* and *Opinions* of Men: In theſe *Opinions*, how Erroneous ſoever, where they are *National*, Men may be *ſincere*, as having been *bred* up in them, and conſequently *ſincerity* ſhall juſtify in *Errors* of *Practice* as well as in *Errors* of *Faith*: This Reaſoning holdeth as ſtrictly in *one* Point, as the *other*, and if it be diſallowed in the *One*, it cannot be admitted in the *Other*.

There is, as I apprehend it, a *greater* Fault in not *aſſenting* to, and in *miſtaking* or *differing* in *ſpeculative* Points, than is commonly imagined: All *Truths* are in ſome ſenſe of a *Moral nature*, and were *ſpeculative* Truth of no Conſequence, ſtill it argues a *Pravity* of *Mind* not to *aſſent* to any *Truths*, much more to *contradict* them; we muſt conſider our *Capacity* as well as

Right of *Judging*: and we must be supposed *qualified* to enter into the *abstrusest* Enquirys, or we must not presume to *determine* against them. Otherwise if we are not able to *judge* for our *selves*, our *Judgment* must be directed by *others*, and *he*, that in such a Case will oppose his *Private* to the *Publick* Judgment and Authority, will be *condemned* as an *Obstinate* and *Partial* Man; and let *him* be never so *sincere*, even as *sincere*, as *Ignorance* and *Blindness* can make him, still his *sincerity* will not *avail* him, but will be resolved into a *Blockish* Incapacity to discern the *Truth*, or an *Obstinate* Perverseness in *not acknowledging it*, whenever he pretendeth to pass any *Judgment* upon it.

It is commonly suggested that *Matters* of *Faith* are *Points* of *Speculation*, in which we may *safely differ*, provided we are *sincere* in our *searches*, and *our present Persuasion*; if *Articles* of *Faith* were proposed only, as so many *Problems* of no *Consequence* in the *Determination* of them, there might be some Colour in these suggestions; but as *they* are *Truths* proposed by God Himself of the highest Consequence to his *Glory* and our *Salvation*, it will be of *equal* Consequence how we believe: and it will prove but an Indifferent Plea, that we cannot believe them, or that we do *sincerely disbelieve* them: where God requireth our Assent we can enter no *Plea* for our Denyal or Contradiction. *Charity* and *sincerity* must accompany our *Faith*, and what must so *Indivisibly* go along with a *Right Faith*, will not avail to our *Justification* in a *Wrong*. This *Sincerity* is a Constant Disposition

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to *Truth* and *Goodness*, and an Uniform Practice answerable to such a Disposition: It is indeed the *Uprightness* and *Integrity* of our Nature, and, when the *Patrons* of *it* will clearly state what *failings* are consistent with it in this our *lapsed* Condition so as to *justify* a Man in his *Errors*, then, as *Errors* themselves are a *Failing*, they will only prove, that *one Failing* can *justify another*: and whether the present *Opposition* to the *Truth*, that is to the *Faith* as we profess it, proceedeth from any other *sincerity*, than a *sincere Hatred* of it, must be left to *impartial* Men to *consider*.

After all, *Sincerity* is none of the *Terms* proposed for our *Justification*: It is *equaly* required in all our *Approaches* to God, and in *every* Discharge of our Duty: It fitteth and prepareth us for the Reception of Divine Truths, when offered, but will never justify us independent of those Truths, or in our Denyal and Contradiction of them. And it may be of use and Instruction to us to consider how *Sincerity* is applied to *Faith* in the *Scriptures*: And this I hope will satisfy and compleat this Argument.

Sincerity in the *Gospel* is opposed to *Hypocrisy*, as it respecteth the *Persons believing*, and to all *mixture* of *Error* with the *Truth*, as it respecteth the *Doctrines* to be *believed*: And it is as strictly required, that the *Doctrine* be *uncorrupt*, as that the *Believer* be *sincere*: If then the *Doctrine* be not *sincere*, the *sincerity* of the Person who holdeth it will not *avail*.

On our Part therefore [a] *holding the Faith*, we must *hold a good Conscience* also, or like those, *who put it away*, we *shall make shipwrack of the Faith.* The [b] *Ministers* of *Christ* especialy, and *Stewards of the Mysterys of GOD* must [c] *hold the Mysterys of the Faith in a pure Conscience.*

With respect to the *Doctrine*, together with [d] *a good Conscience and a Pure, we must hold fast the form of sound Words, and keep that good Thing, that sacred Depositum, which was committed to us.* [e] *Holding fast the faithful Word, as we have been taught*, (or according to the *stated Doctrine*) *that we may be able by sound Doctrine both to exhort and convince the Gainsayers.* And besides *shewing himself a Pattern of good Works*, *Titus* is required also [f] *in Doctrine to shew Uncorruptness, Gravity, sincerity: sound speech, that cannot be condemned*: here *Uncorruptness* and *Sincerity* are words of the *same force* in the *Original*, signifying the *unsullied Purity* and *Integrity* of the *Gospel*, in opposition to all *Heretical Mixtures*, and *Corrupt Alterations.* And *sound Speech*, *sound Doctrine*, and the *form of sound Words* signify the *wholesome untainted salutary Truths* of the *Gospel*, that [g] *Grace of* GOD, *which bringeth Salvation.* And therefore, if [h] *any Man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome Words, even the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Doctrine, which is according to Godliness, even* [i] *the Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints, he is proud knowing no-*

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a 1 Tim. I. 19. *b* 1 Cor. IV. 1. *c* 1 Tim. III. 9. *d* 2 Tim. I. 13, 14. *e* Tit. I. 9. *f* Tit. II. 7, 8. *g* ver. 11. *h* 1 Tim. VI, 3, 4. *i* Jude, ver. 4.

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thing: There is the more *reaſon* for theſe *earneſt* and *ſolemn Injunctions*, *becauſe* [a] *the time will come*, *when they will not endure ſound Doctrine*, and *ſuch* as were the *Cretians*, [b] *muſt be rebuked ſharply*, *that they may be ſound in the Faith.*

Sincerity of *Doctrine* is ſo conſtantly joyned with *ſincerity* of *Mind*, that in the *Scriptures* a *good Conſcience* and a *corrupt Faith* are *never* found *together*. *Truth* dwelleth with *ſincerity*, but [c] *Lies are ſpoken in Hypocriſy*; and tho' we cannot *know* the *Heart*, yet if we judge by the *direction* of *thoſe*, who had the *diſcerning of Spirits*, we ſhall find, that in his firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy* [d] the *Apoſtle* aſcribeth *perverſe Diſputings to Men of Corrupt Minds*, and in his *ſecond* [e] ſpeaking of thoſe, who *reſiſt the Truth*, he completeth their Character by calling them *Men of Corrupt Minds*, *reprobate concerning the Faith*: And the Apoſtle hath further aſſured us, that [f] *when Men give heed to ſeducing Spirits and Doctrine of Devils*, God *will ſend them a ſtrong Deluſion*, *that they ſhould not only ſpeak*, *but alſo believe a Lye.* But we [g] *know that no Lye is of the Truth*, and may both ask and anſwer the Queſtion with St *John*. *Who is a Lyar*, *but he that denyeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt.* I have little Hopes of convincing *Infidels*, or *thoſe*, who think they may *believe* as they *pleaſe*, which amounteth to the *ſame* thing as *Misbelieving* or *not Believing* at all; For this *Principle* of *Sincerity* thus applied taketh away

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a 2 Tim. IV. 3. *b* Tit. I. 13. *c* 1 Tim. IV. 2. *d* 1 Tim. VI. 5. *e* 2 Tim. III. 8. *f* 1 Tim. IV. 1. 2 Theſſal. II. 11, 12. *g* 1 John II. 21, 22.

all *Distinction* between *true* and *false Religion*, and rendereth a Man satisfied in his present Sentiments, be they what they will, whether he hath already set up his rest, or whether he be all his Life long enquiring without any settled Persuasion, unless perpetual Doubts and Uncertaintys, or the present Apprehensions of the Mind may be called a Persuasion.

But I have been so large upon this Head to arm and defend *Believers* against the wily *Arts* and *Sophistry* of these *Seducers*: if their *Principle* be true both *Unity* and *Necessity* of *Faith* are destroyed, and *Salvation* is put on *another* Foot, than the *Gospel*: The *Terms* propounded by the *Scriptures* are vacated, and then we must be Saved not according to the *Word* of God, but to these Men's *Devices*. But those Arguments must be inconclusive, which are built upon such false Suppositions, and all this plausible Pretence of *Sincerity* is nothing, but an *empty Notion* considered in itself, and a *destructive Device*, applied to the *Faith* of *Christ*: We are the truest *Advocates* for *Sincerity*, who both *allow* it, and *insist* upon it. That *Faith* is not *right* which is not *sincere*, and to *hold the Truth in Hypocrisy is to change the Truth of* God *into a Lye*. But will *sincerity* therefore, supposing it employed in the search of *Truth* justify us in *Error*? What at *most* can but be pleaded in *Extenuation* and *Excuse* is but a *weak Title* to the Favour of God.

In the *Acts* we have *three* very remarkable Instances of the *Acceptance* of *sincere Persons*, as *such*: *two* of them in the *search* of *Truth*: the *third*

third as he thought, in the full *Possession* of *it*, and when these general *Patrons* of *Sincerity* can produce any *Parallel* Cases, we shall expect to find the *same*, or some *answerable* Evidence of their *Acceptance*.

The *first* Instance is of the *Eunuch*, who had been at [a] *Jerusalem for to Worship*, and in his return was *reading the Prophet Esaias*; and as he was searching after Divine Knowledge he was led into it by *Philip*, who was expressly sent unto him by the *Spirit* for that Purpose.

The *second* is of *Cornelius* [b] *a devout Man, and one that feared* God *with all his House, which gave much Alms to the People, and prayed to* God *alway*. This Person also was in search of Truth, and in a perfect Disposition to find and embrace it: He gave the highest and most undoubted *Marks* of his *sincerity* in his *Prayers* and his *Alms*: and *they came up for a Memorial before* God: The Consequence was a Command by an *Angel* to send for *Peter*, *who should tell him what he ought to do*. Thus God who is no Respecter of Persons, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, accepted this Centurion, who feared Him, and worked Righteousness, and so accepting him was pleased to call him to a State of Salvation. From these Instances it appeareth that the *sincerity* of these Persons did not give them any strict Right or Title to Salvation, but in order to their Salvation our *Blessed Lord was pleased to call them to the Knowledge of his Grace, and to Faith in Him.*

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a Acts VIII. 27, &c. *b* Acts X, 1, 2, &c.

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The *third* Instance is of St *Paul*, who was a most *zealous* and *sincere* Persecutor of the *Church* of *Christ*, and this Person was not in search of Truth, but fixed as he thought, and settled in it. For his Character, *Act.* 24. 16. *Herein he exercised himself to have always a Conscience void of Offence toward* God *and toward Men*; and therefore he might well declare, as he did [a] *That he had lived in all good Conscience before* God according to the *Jews* Religion in which [b] *he profited above many, that were his Equals*: [c] *Concerning Zeal*, if that be any *mark of sincerity, persecuting the Church, touching the Law Blameless.* Yet all these availed him not: For *this* Proof of his *sincerity*, having *been before* [d] *a Blasphemer and a Persecutor*, *he* calleth *himself the chief of sinners, and* [e] *the least of all the Apostles, not meet to be called an Apostle, because he persecuted the Church of* God: The *Righteousness* which is of the *Law* he disclaimeth as insufficient to *Salvation*, and prayeth, that [f] *he may not be found in his own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is thro' Faith, the Righteousness, which is of* God *by Faith.* To what purpose then served his *sincerity*? *not* of it self to *justify*, but to *guide* him to the *only* means of *Justification*, even to the same *Jesus*, *whom he* [g] *had persecuted*: He was *called* and *converted* by *Christ* himself to *preach that Faith*, *which* [h] *he once persecuted and destroyed*: and himself has told us, *that he* [i] *obtained Mercy, because he did it ignorantly, and in Unbelief.*

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a Acts XXIII. 1. *b* Gal. I. 14. *c* Phil. III. 6. *d* 1 Tim. I. 13, 15. *e* 1 Cor. XV. 9. *f* Phil. III. 9. *g* Acts IX. 5. *h* Gal. I. 23. *i* 1 Tim. I. 13.

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His *ſincerity* is undoubted, and his *Character* in all parts anſwerable to it, yet of it ſelf it had been thro' its *Effects* the *Reaſon* of his *Condemnation*, not of his *Juſtification*: To conclude, this *Apoſtle* hath unanſwerably argued that *neither by the* [a] *Moral, nor Ceremonial Law could any Fleſh be ſaved; ſince* [b] *all have ſinned and come ſhort of the Glory of* God. He that reſteth upon *either* reſteth upon his own *Merits*, and his *ſincerity* how great ſoever, is, like his *Morality* blemiſhed with ſome Sins at leaſt, moſt certainly with manifold Infirmitys. The Doctrine of *ſincerity* thus conſidered is inconſiſtent with the whole *Terms* and Tenour of the *Goſpel*, and can receive no Countenance, but from the *Infidel* and *Pelagian ſcheme*.

3. The *third* Pretenſion againſt a determinate agreement in *Faith*, and the *Scriptures*, which deliver it, is this, That God is *better* pleaſed and *more* glorified by *Variety* then *Uniformity* in *Religion*.

In the *Creation* indeed God is glorified by *Variety*, and it is an Argument of his infinite Wiſdom and Power, that he hath made not only ſo *many* Creatures but ſo *various*, when every Denomination of Being is different from the reſt, and the *Numbers* of them are counted by their *Variety*, And if God were as greatly glorified in *Variety* of Religions, as by the *Variety* of his Creatures, there might ſeem ſome faint ſhadow of a Pretence in this fanciful Suggeſtion. But there is a great difference be-

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[a] Rom. Gal. paſſim. [b] Rom. III. 23.

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tween God's *Productions* and Man's *Conceptions*: *Religion* refers to God, who is *One*; and to *Truth*, which is also *One*, and therefore we cannot think of God *diverſly* and *truly* at the ſame time. Here *contrary* Opinions cannot be allowed, nor can *Religion* conſidered only as a *Science* admit, what no other *Science* admits, *different Theorys*, and all *equaly* true. *Diverſity* in our ſeveral *Syſtems*, when we would frame and adjuſt the whole Order and Proceſs of the Creation, proceedeth from nothing but our *Ignorance* and *Preſumption*: And different Schemes of *Religion*, where we depart either from the *Light* of *Nature* or from expreſs *Revelation*, are only ſo many Arguments of our *Ignorance* and *Weakneſs*: This was evident in the *variety* the *Heathens* had, both of *Gods* and *Religions*, and is no leſs evident in the ſeveral *Hereſies* of *Chriſtians*. And is this indeed the way of pleaſing and glorifying God by a *various* Profeſſion of the *Faith*? as if God was pleaſed with *Error*, and his Honour *more* promoted by *differing* from, than by *agreeing* in the *Truth*. And tho' it is ſaid, that the *Minds* of Men are as *various* as their *Faces*, yet when *Truth* is the *Object*, they muſt be of one *Mind*, and *variety* only argueth the *perverſity* and *depravity* of our *Nature*. God is glorified not by the *variety* of our Thoughts, but by the Truth and Union of our Sentiments, *by the* [a] *caſting down Imaginations, and every high thing, that exalteth it ſelf againſt the Knowledge of* God, *and bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Chriſt.*

[a] 2 Cor. X. 5.

So

So far as *Variety* in Religion is pleaded for and recommended in *Christian* Countrys, not with regard to different *Opinions* in *speculative* Points of an *indifferent* Nature, but with regard to the great *Articles* of *Faith* this may be a sufficient reply: But so far as thro' the manifold Wisdom and Dispensations of God *Variety* of Religions have succeeded in the World, and subsisted at the same time in different parts of the Earth, the Argument in this View deserves a more particular Consideration, both as it may be drawn to bad Purposes, and applied to excellent good ones; and from a just Consideration of it we shall find no Encouragement for *Errors* and *Heresys* in Religion, but great and glorious Occasions to vindicate the *Goodness*, and adore the Infinite *Wisdom*, *Justice* and *Mercy* of God.

There are two things chiefly to be Considered: The *different* Capacitys and Abilitys of Men in all Countrys over all the Earth, and the *different* Degrees of *Light* which God hath afforded Mankind in the several Nations and Ages of the World.

From the *different* Degrees of *Light* which God hath afforded Mankind, there arises a *diversity* of *Religion* and *Obligation*, and from the *different Laws* and *Dispensations* given, we may reasonably conclude, that God will accept of every Man according to the *Dispensation*, under which he lived: And if God hath in his Infinite Wisdom and Mercy provided for the Salvation of Mankind in all Ages notwithstanding the great Weakness and Depravity of their Nature,

Nature, his *Goodneſs* is abſolved from all the *Blaſphemous* Charges of *Impious* and *Fooliſh* Men, ſince He never hath been *wanting* to Mankind, but Mankind have been only *wanting* to themſelves.

If we conſider Mankind as under the *Law* of *Nature* alone, it will not be material to diſpute whether this *Law* and the *Obligation* of it, as it refers to GOD, is made known by the meer *Light* of Nature, or by any *Declaration* from GOD: The *Light* of Nature diſcovering the *Obligation*, and awakening the *Conſcience*, is an *Internal* Revelation, and if Man does obey this *Law*, no doubt he ſhall be accepted in *it*.

If we conſider Mankind as under the *Law* of *Nature* given and enforced by *Revelation* and a *ſeries* of *Communications* between GOD and Man, we ſhall then diſcern the great *Goodneſs of* GOD to Mankind in all Ages from the Creation of the World; In the State of *Innocence*, the Scriptures aſſure us, GOD revealed Himſelf to our firſt Parents, and when they had *fallen*, He revealed Himſelf again, at once pronouncing *Judgment* on them and promiſing *Pardon* to them; Upon the *Terms* of that *Promiſe* He receives all Mankind, and all his *ſubſequent* Revelations were given to preſerve the Knowledge of true Religion, and to renew and make known this Promiſe till the *full* Revelation of it by the Coming of *Chriſt*. From *Adam* unto *Noah* the Knowledge of it was eaſily preſerved, from *Noah* unto *Abraham* likewiſe it muſt be known: from *Abraham* and his Deſcendants the Children of *Iſhmael* and *Keturah* it would

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ſpread over many Nations in many great and extenſive Branches: That notwithſtanding theſe gracious Revelations from *Noah* unto the time of the *Patriarchs* the World degenerated, and fell from the Knowledge and Worſhip of the true God into *Idolatry*, this is no Impeachment of his *Goodneſs*; If Men will ſin and tranſgreſs, they draw the Conſequences, be they what they will, upon themſelves. Afterwards (as God had choſen *Abraham* and his *Seed*) the Children of *Iſrael* were a perpetual *Monument* of his true Religion, and a Viſible *Aſſurance* of his *Promiſe*, which in ſucceeding Ages was ſtill more clear and expreſs, that it *ſhould* be *performed*, as they are now a *living Teſtimony*, that it *is perfomed*. In *other* Nations the Knowledge of God was *loſt* thro' their own Corruption, in *this* of the *Jews* it was *preſerved*: and *preſerved* with Difficulty by frequent Corrections and Admonitions, by a Courſe of ſevere Judgments, and great Mercys, and by a ſucceſſion of Prophets, till this *People* were become perfectly *averſe* to *Idolatry*, and then as they were diſperſed over many Regions of the World, the Providence of God afforded Mankind new means of Inſtruction in all parts of their *Diſperſion*, and all along from the time of *Moſes* unto *Chriſt* a door was left open to receive the *Gentiles* into the *Church* of God, as it ſtood in the Days of *Noah*, ſo that in no Age hath He left *Himſelf without Witneſs* both *Natural* and *Revealed*; and if Men will not attend to the *Natural* Teſtimony, it is no Wonder they ſhould neglect, and ſo neglecting entirely

ly loſe the *revealed*: but the *Goodneſs* of GOD is abſolved, and if they *periſh*, they *periſh* by their own *Default*.

If we place the Argument in another Light with reſpect to thoſe, who admit of no *Revelation*, then we muſt ſuppoſe the whole World to be under no *other* Religion, than that of *Nature*, and by their *Natural* Strength they muſt *ſtand* or *fall*. According to theſe Men the *Light* of *Nature* is ſufficient of it ſelf, ſo clear and full as to need no other to inform and direct them in their Duty, and if they will act againſt it, and in defiance of it, *they are without Excuſe*. Look upon the *Heathen* World in this View, and ſay, if *they* periſh, how is the *Goodneſs* of GOD concerned to interpoſe? Upon this ſuppoſition Man muſt be left to the *Light* of Nature alone, no *Revelation* or *Supernatural* Aſſiſtance is allowed, and the *Light* of Nature being *ſufficient*, thoſe that Sin againſt it, are *ſelf condemned*; So that if no *Revelation* had been ever given, and Men had been *Univerſaly* Tranſgreſſors, and *Death* and *Miſery* be the Conſequence of their Tranſgreſſion, *what* have they to plead? while they acknowledge the *ſufficiency* of their *Guide* and refuſe all other Aſſiſtance, they abſolve the *Goodneſs* of GOD. What is it to them, whether GOD grants a *Revelation* to one part of the World, and denys it to another? they believe He hath granted it to *none*. They reſt upon the *Light* of Nature alone; and it can be no Injury to them, that a *Revelation* is vouchſafed, (tho' it is not wanting to thoſe, who can ſee by the *Light* of Nature without it)

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ſince it may be greatly *deſireable*, where wretched Mortals wander on in the Dark, and are not able under the Conduct of that *Guide* alone to recover the right way.

Allowing the *ſufficiency* of this *Guide their Condemnation is juſt*, who forſake it, Allowing the *inſufficiency* of it the *Goodneſs* of God is greatly manifeſted in giving us a new and ſupplementary *Light*, whereby our Natural *Light* is cleared up, and reſtored to its Original Brightneſs, and tho' theſe Men will not allow the *Scriptures* to be *inſpired*, yet we will take them for our *Guide*, and leave them to the beſt Productions of Natural *Light*, that ever appeared in the World. Upon the Foot of *Revelation*, we allow that there hath been a Variety of Religions anſwerable to the ſeveral Diſpenſations of God to Mankind. We will call the Religion of *Adam* before the *Fall* pure *Natural* Religion with one Injunction added, which the *Light* of Nature would direct him to obey. After the *Fall* his Religion was ſtill *Natural* Religion with the *inſtitution* of *Sacrifices* added: and ſuch was the Religion of *Noah*, and of all the World unto *Moſes*: A *Revelation* indeed is all along concurrent with it, but that *alters* not, it only *enforces* the *Religion* of *Nature*: The *Jews* had a peculiar Diſpenſation given them, which affected no other People, any further than as it compriſed the *Patriarchal* Religion. *That* is the *Religion* of all the World beſides, and where the *revealed* part of it is loſt, there the *Religion* of Nature *ſtands alone*, and as *before*, all *Nations* might be accepted, who walked according to the

the *Patriarchal*, or *Natural* Religion, all *People*, who have no *Revelation* will alſo be accepted, that walk according to the *Light* of *Nature*, not in *Violation*, but in *Obedience* to the *Laws* of God as delivered in *Natural* Religion.

But where a *Revelation* is received, there we think our ſelves *obliged* to obſerve *all* that we find *commanded* in it, to *believe what* that *Revelation* requires, and to do *what* it commands, both with regard to *Natural* and *Inſtituted* Religion, and upon this *Faith* and *Obedience* we do ground our Hopes of *Salvation*. Whether *Mahometans*, *Indians*, or any *Denomination* of *Heathen* will be accepted is a Queſtion we cannot reſolve, much leſs can we preſume to ſay that God is *obliged* to accept *them*. If their ſeveral *Religions* carry nothing in them deſtructive of the *Law* of *Nature*, and *theſe People* ſeveraly live in a juſt Conformity to it, they are ſo far upon the ſame Foot with the reſt of the World, who had no *ſpecial* Revelation vouchſafed them. This however is not the Caſe of the *Mahometans*, for they pretend to a *Revelation*, and oppoſe their *Alcoran* to the *Goſpel*. And with reference to *them*, as *Superſtition* and *Cruelty* overſpreads the *Mahometans*, and as *Idolatry* the *Indians* and other *Heathen*, we muſt reſolve the Acceptance of the *Beſt* among *them* into the *Uncovenanted* Mercys of God.

From the ſeveral *Diſpenſations* of God we may paſs now to the different *Capacitys* of Men, conſidered as another Argument for *Variety* in Religion. But it doth not appear to me, that God ſuits Religion, either *Natural* or *Revealed*, to

to the *different Capacitys* of Men. The *Obligation* in *Both* is *Univerſal* and *Uniform*: *Univerſal* to all Mankind in *Natural* Religion, and *Univerſal* to all, to whom a *Revelation* is given: There are not in *Natural* or *Revealed* Religion different *ſets* of *Truths* to be believed, or of *Dutys* to be practiced by the *Vulgar* and the *Learned*, but all are *equaly* obliged according to their *Abilitys*, *Leiſure* and *Opportunitys* to *know*, to *believe*, and to *do* them: This will not create a *Variety* of Religion, it only ſuppoſes a *further* and *ſhorter* Progreſs in *learned* Enquirys, but admits no *differences* in the great *Articles*, whether of *Faith*, or *Practice*. *Faith* is ever *Objectively One*, and the *Law* of *Nature* is always the *ſame*, and *Religion varieth not* according to Mens *Capacitys*: but God will have a Regard unto *them*, as *He* alone *knoweth the Heart*, and whether Men have *neglected* or *improved* their *Opportunitys* of *Knowledge* according to their ſeveral *Abilitys*.

In all the *Variety* of Mens Parts and Abilitys here is no room for *Error* in Oppoſition to *Truth*; From Infancy to Manhood we encreaſe in Underſtanding as well as Stature, and when we are grown up ſome are taller, and ſome are more Knowing, than others, but ſtill, as all are equaly *Men*, what all do know muſt be equaly *Truth*. There is no *difference* but in the *Degrees* of Knowledge, ſome may know more than others, but the Knowledge of all muſt center and end in *Truth*: In *Natural* Religion and *Revealed*, nothing, but *Truth* muſt be admitted and profeſſed, whatever *difference* there

is of *Knowledge*, there must be no *Contradiction* to *Truth*. There is a growth in *Christian* as well as in *Natural* Knowledge, and those, who are newly converted, are considered by the *Apostles* as [a] *Babes in Christ*; The *Apostles* adapted their *Teaching* to the *Progress* and *Capacity* of their *Hearers*, and St *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, he *spake unto them even as unto* [b] *Babes in Christ*; and in the [c] *Epistle* to the *Hebrews* the *Apostle* marketh out our *Progress* in *Christian* Knowledge from the first *Rudiments* until we come to *Perfection*, reproving at the same time the slowness of their Proficiency: The *Principles of the Doctrine of Christ* are sufficient for *those*, whose *Capacitys* and *Opportunitys* will carry them no further than a plain *Catechatical* Knowledge, and while they continue in the *Truth*, they are still going on in the *right* way, and will be accepted of GOD. But whatever the *degree* of our *Knowledge* and *Perfection* is, we may remember the *Apostle*'s Admonition, *to go on unto Perfection*, and as St *Peter* exhorteth, *to* [d] *grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*; and against all arguing from *difference* of *Capacity* for *variety* of *Religions* we may allege those excellent words of St *Paul*, be our Progress and Capacitys less or greater, [e] *Nevertheless whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same Rule, let us mind the same things.*

Should we suppose never so many *Gradations* in Mankind, so many, as intervene from

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a 1 Pet. II. 2. *b* 1 Cor. III 1. *c* Hebr. V. 12, &c. VI. 1, 2. *d* 2 Pet. III. 18. *e* Phil, III. 16.

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a meer *ſuperiority* above *Brutes* to an *Approximation* to *Angels*, ſtill if we ſuppoſe Man to be a *Rational* Creature, and *Reaſon* to be the ſame in all, *Truth* muſt ever be its *Object*, and no *Deviation* from it in *Practice* or *Opinion* muſt be allowed. We are taught, (and I may uſe it for Illuſtration) that there are *different* Orders of *Angels*, as there are *different* Orders of *Men*; and we may preſume, that in *Heaven*, tho' it be not ſo upon *Earth*, they, who excell in *Dignity* excell in *Underſtanding* alſo, but ſtill what *Variety* ſoever may ariſe from their *ſeveral* Orders, and how Beautiful ſoever the Aſcent may ſhew from one *Degree* of a ſublime Underſtanding to another, till it reaches from the *loweſt Order* to the *higheſt* Knowledge a *Created* Nature is *capable* of *receiving*, and *able* to *ſuſtain*, ſtill it is *Truth*, which aſcends thro' all the *Degrees*, from the *meaneſt Reaſonable* Creature upon *Earth* to the *Angels of the Preſence* before the Throne of GOD. *Good* and *Evil*, *Truth* and *Falſhood* divided the *Angels* of Heaven, and with reſpect to Heaven and Eternal Happineſs, *theſe* will divide *all Mankind* at the laſt Day: The *Light* of Nature is nothing but the *Manifeſtation* of *Truth*, and the *Light* of *Revelation* is the *ſame*: *Revelation* teaches what the *Light* of Nature could not diſcover, and therefore obliges *thoſe* only, to *whom* it is propoſed, and it is a great and gracious Conſolation, that with reſpect to the ſublime *Myſterys* of our *Faith*, *Comparative Ignorance* will never *hurt* us, if it proceeds not from ſome *Neglect* or *Abuſe* of our *Facultys*; But a *Variety* of *Errors* and *Oppoſitions*

of Science falsely so called, which are first devised, and afterwards pertinaciously maintained by those, who arrogate to themselves a *superiority* of Understanding above other Men, *these* are the Dangerous *Rocks* on which *Proud* and *Conceited* Spirits *make shipwrack of their Faith and Salvation.*

Whatever *Variety* of Religion may be admitted according to the *various Dispensations* of God, no *Variety* of *Error* can be allowed. Religion in a State of *Innocence*, as to the *Form* and *Manner* of it, is *different* from *what* it is in a State of *Sin*, and the Religion of *Noah* was *different* as to its *Form*, from the Religion of *Moses*: and the Religion of the *Gospel* is *different* from *Both*; But still there is *Truth* and nothing but *Truth* in *All*: And then tho' *Variety* of true Religions have prevailed; and it furnishes a Beautiful Scene to behold the *different* Degrees of *Light*, which God hath vouchsafed to Mankind in all Ages, and in divers Countrys, yet still no *false* Religion, nor *Falshood* in Religion can be admitted to *diversify* the Prospect, and contribute any thing to the *Delight* of Man, or to the *Glory* of God.

So far as *Variety* is consistent with the *truth* of Religion, the *Christian Church* hath ever been *diversified* in the several Branches of it: in the *sundry* Forms and Ceremonies of its *Worship*, but *not* in its Faith and Doctrines is this *variety* to be discerned. Every Nation hath its peculiar *Rites*: they *differ* without *disagreeing*, and while they are *distinguished* by their *several* Usages, they are *united* in the same great *Arti-*

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cles of their *Faith*. The *Church* of *Rome* is no further *true*, than She *agreeth* with the *Primitive*: All her *variety* is her *ſhame* and her *error*.

But while the *Patrons* of *Latitude* admire and recommend their boaſted *variety*, we ſhall ſtrive moſt truly to promote GOD's Glory by *Unity* and *Agreement*, [a] *endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, as long as we are perſuaded of the unſpeakable Miſchiefs of *Hereſie*, and *Diviſion*, and are aſſured by the *Apoſtle*, *that* [b] *there is One Body, and One Spirit, even as ye are called in one Hope of your Calling: One Lord, One Faith, One Baptiſm: One* GOD, *and Father of All, who is above all, and thro' all, and in you all.*

From theſe Exceptions to it, we may more aſſuredly learn the abſolute Neceſſity of agreeing in *one determinate* Senſe with regard to the great *Articles* of our *Faith*: There is no other way to avoid [c] *Confuſion and every evil Work*, and we muſt be *like minded*, [d] *That we may with one Mind, and one Mouth glorifie* GOD, *even the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: Otherwiſe inſtead of being *Stedfaſt in the Faith*, we ſhall either be *Infidels*, and *deny* it, or *Hereticks*, and *contradict* it, or *like* [e] *Children toſſed to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine.* But let us, *my beloved Brethren*, think of theſe things, and conſider what hath been ſaid, and the *Lord* give us *a right Underſtanding in all Things.*

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a Epheſ. IV. 1. *b* v. 4, 5. *c* Jam. III. 16. d Rom. XV. 5, 6. *e* Eph. IV. 14.

Now to the Holy, Bleſſed and Undivided TRINITY, the FATHER, the SON and the HOLY GHOST, be aſcribed, as is moſt due, all Honour, and Power, all Adoration and Bleſſing for Ever and Ever. Amen.

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SERMON V.

Preached *Apr.* 3. 1729.

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1 Cor. II. 13.

Which Things alſo we ſpeak, not in the Words, which Man's Wiſdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth.

FROM the eleventh verſe it appeareth that *no Man knoweth the Things of* God: the *Purpoſes* of his *Will*, and the *Secrets* of his *Nature*: Theſe are revealed to us by the *Spirit*, who *ſearcheth all things, even the deep Things of* God. As our own Thoughts, till diſcloſed, are known to no Man, beſides our ſelves, as our own Spirits only are conſcious of them, and not the Spirits of

of other Men, *even ſo the Things of* God *knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of* God.

The Compariſon holdeth moſt ſtrictly, as the *Apoſtle* puts it with reſpect to Men: among them no Man knoweth anothers Thoughts, much leſs can any Man know the Secrets, which belong to God; but it doth not hold in the Reverſe, For tho' no one but the *Spirit* knoweth the Things of God, yet the ſame *Spirit*, which ſearcheth the deep Things of God, knoweth the Things of Man alſo, and ſearcheth all the deepeſt and moſt inward Receſſes of his Soul, and we may juſtly apply to the *Holy Spirit* what the *Apoſtle* aſſerteth of the *Word* of God, [a] *that He is a diſcerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart, Neither is there any Creature, that is not manifeſt in his ſight: but all things are naked and opened unto the Eyes of Him, with whom we have to do.*

This Attribute of *Omniſcience* is truly incommunicable, and may be conſidered as challenged by, and aſcribed unto God in *general*, without any manifeſt Deſignation of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, or as challenged by, and aſcribed unto *each* of the *Divine Perſons* in the ſame manner without any reſtraint or limitation. Thus in *general* it is challenged by God. [b] *I the* Lord *ſearch the Hearts, I try the Reins*: and thus it is aſcribed unto *Him*, [c] *O Lord of Hoſts, that judgeſt righteouſly, that tryeſt the Reins and the Heart*, and the like we meet with in ſeveral parallel Places: But tho' the Expreſ-

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a Hebr. IV. 12. *b* Jer. XI. 20. XX. 12. *c* XI. 20. XX. 12.

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ſions in the *Old Teſtament* are uſualy general, yet in ſeveral Paſſages, if we carefuly regard them, they are ſpoken by, and applied to the *Son*, the *Second* Perſon in the GOD-HEAD. Thus in the firſt Book of *Samuel* (XVI.) they are ſpoken of *Him*. *Pſalm* XLIV. they are applied unto *Him*. For the Lord ſpoken of is *David*'s Lord, who was the GOD, and King, and Ruler of *Jacob*, and [a] *He ſeeth not as Man ſeeth. For Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the Heart*. And the *Pſalm* is addreſſed to that GOD, who went forth with their Hoſts, and wrought all his Wonders for them of old; He was the LORD their GOD, the living and true GOD, and if they had *forgotten the Name of their* GOD, *or ſtretched forth their hands unto a ſtrange* [b] *God, ſhall not* GOD *ſearch this out? for He knoweth the ſecrets of the Heart*. But in the *New Teſtament* this his Divine Prerogative is clear and expreſs. In the ſecond of the *Revelations* He aſſerteth it to *Himſelf*, [c] *I am He, that ſearcheth the Reins and the Heart*: St *John* teſtifieth that *He* [d] *knew what was in Man*. The other *Evangeliſts*, that *He knew* [e] *their thoughts*, and the *Apoſtles* with the whole *Church* in their Common Prayer aſcribe this *Omniſcience* unto *Him* in the moſt ſolemn manner. [f] *Thou*, LORD, *which knoweſt the Hearts of all Men*. Concerning the Bleſſed *Spirit* this Chapter is a ſufficient Proof, and expreſſeth his *Omniſcience* in the higheſt Terms: For the *Spirit*, who know-

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a 1 Sam. XVI. 7. *b* Pſ. XLIV. 21. *c* Rev. II. 21. *d* John II. 25. *e* Matt. IX. 4. Mark II. 8, &c. *f* Acts I. 24.

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eth the Things of GOD: who searcheth all things, even the deep things of GOD, must be *Omniscient*, and therefore GOD *hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit*, because *He* hath perfect Knowledge of them, *for the Spirit searcheth all things even the deep things of* GOD. To the same purpose also the CXXXIX *Psalm* may be understood, a *Psalm* in every part setting forth the Divine Omniscience and Omnipresence; To which I may add, as a clearer Evidence, *Rom.* VIII. where we are taught that [a] *the Spirit helpeth our Infirmitys, and maketh Intercession for us* in such a Manner, as evidently shows the *Communication* of Knowledge in the Blessed *Trinity*, where we find, that as the *Spirit knoweth the Things of* GOD, and *searcheth all things even the deep Things of* GOD, Our Blessed *Lord* also, *He that searcheth the Hearts, knoweth what is the Mind of the Spirit, because He maketh Intercession for the Saints according to the Will of* GOD. Here are *Three Persons* distinctly mentioned: The *Spirit*, *He that searcheth the Heart*, and GOD: and here are *two Intercessions*, that of the *Spirit*, who teaches Men *to pray as they ought*: and so is said to *intercede for them*: and that of our Blessed *Lord*, who intercedes as a *Mediator for the Saints unto* GOD, or *according to the Will of* GOD.

But I shall not insist upon this any longer now, and have mentioned it no further at present, than the evident Connection of the *Text* with the rest of the *Apostle*'s Argument requires,

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[a] Verse 26, 27.

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where he proves that the Doctrine, which he teacheth is the *hidden Myſterious Wiſdom* of GOD, which it was impoſſible for Man to know, or for the Heart of Man to conceive, namely, the wonderful Purpoſe, and manner of our *Redemption* by the Concurrence and Co-operation of the *Father*, of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghoſt*, according to the ſeveral Part each ſuſtains in that great and amazing Work. All this GOD hath *revealed unto us by his Spirit*, [a] *for the Spirit ſearcheth all Things, even the deep Things of GOD*: And this *Omniſcience* demonſtrateth the *Divinity* of *Eſſence*, For whoſoever knoweth the Things of GOD, as the *Spirit* of a Man knoweth the Things of a Man, is truly and eſſentialy GOD; and as the *Apoſtle* argueth, *Now* [b] *we have not received the Spirit of the World, but the Spirit, which is of GOD, that we might know the Things, that are freely given us of GOD. Which Things alſo we ſpeak, not in the Words which Man's Wiſdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth; comparing Spiritual Things with Spiritual.*

This is the only way to receive and apprehend them right: In the *Natural* Man there is neither a *Capacity* to diſcover them, nor a *Diſpoſition* to receive them: while he is guided by his *Reaſon alone*, they are [c] *Fooliſhneſs unto him, neither can he know them, becauſe they are Spiritualy diſcerned*, that is as they are propoſed to us by the *Spirit* of GOD in a manner ſuitable to the *Divine Nature*.

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[a] 1 Cor. II. 10. [b] v. 12. [c] v. 14.

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From this paſſage of the *Apoſtle* taken altogether, and from the Words, I have choſen, we may learn in *what* manner to *receive*, to *underſtand*, and to *teach* thoſe *Divine* Truths, which are revealed unto us by the *Spirit* of GOD.

In diſcourſing upon them I ſhall endeavour to eſtabliſh ſome *Rules* for the *right Underſtanding* of Divine Truths, and for the *Interpretation* of *Scripture*, which conveyeth them to us. This I hope will be of uſe to ſhow, that all *Interpretations*, which contradict the *Doctrines* laid down according to the plain and obvious *Signification* of the Words, and the whole Tenour of *Scripture* muſt be *wrong*, and that all *Conſequences*, which deſtroy ſuch *Doctrines*, muſt be *Falſe*.

In Order to this I will ſhow,

I. *Negatively*, that Divine Truths, and particularly the great Myſterys of Revelation are not taught in the ſame manner with ſecular Sciences, or that Divine Learning is to be taught and received in a different way from Human. *Which Things alſo we ſpeak, not in the Words which Man's Wiſdom teacheth.*

II. In the ſecond place I will ſhow *Poſitively* that theſe Divine Truths are to be taught and received, underſtood and interpreted after a Manner proper and peculiar to themſelves, *in the Words which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth.*

The *Method* of which is here preſcribed, *Comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual.* And the *Reaſon* of it is here given, *Becauſe they are Spiritualy diſcerned.*

As

As to the First, when the *Apostle* saith, we speak, *not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth*, his meaning is not, that *He* and the rest of the *Apostles* spake not in the Language of the People, to whom they preached the *Gospel*, or wrote not in the Tongue of the Country, but that they taught a different Doctrine in Words suited to the Divine Truths, they uttered, to the intent, *That not only unto Men, but unto Principalitys and Powers in Heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of GOD*, as the *Apostle* writes to the [a] *Ephesians*.

By this Expression the *Apostle* doth moreover signify, that altho' the *Doctrine*, he delivers, be *Mysterious*, the *Words* are exceeding *Plain*, and he [b] declares unto them all the *Counsel* of GOD not in *involved* Allegorical Forms of Speech, such as the *Heathen Mysterys* were wrapped in, but in *direct* and *open* Propositions concerning the whole Course and Order settled and pursued in the great Work of our *Redemption*.

Again by speaking, *not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth* the *Apostle* means, that *he* speaketh not according to the Rules of Human Eloquence and Persuasion, nor frames his Discourse and Writings after the *Artificial* and *Rhetorical* Compositions of the *Grecian* Wits and Philosophers, but in that plain Dignity, and noble Simplicity of Speech, which became the Authority and Importance of his Doctrine. [c] *For he came not with Excellency of Speech, and his*

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a Ephes. III. 9, 10. b Acts XX. 27. c 1 Cor. II. 1, 4, 5.

Preach-

Preaching was not with enticing Words of Man's Wiſdom, that our Faith ſhould not ſtand in the Wiſdom of Men, but in the Power of GOD; Which things alſo we ſpeak not in the Words, which Man's Wiſdom teacheth; And ſo I proceed to ſhow

I. *Negatively*, that Divine Truths and particularly the great Myſterys of Revelation are not taught in the ſame manner with ſecular Sciences, or that Divine Learning is to be taught and received in a different way from Human, *which things we alſo ſpeak*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, *not in the Words which Man's Wiſdom teacheth.*

The *Goſpel* was not drawn from the Schools or Inſtitutions of *Philoſophy*: It was not built upon their *maxims*, nor taught in their *method*, nor expreſſed in their *manner*? It depended not upon the Subtilty of Wit, nor the Force of Oratory, nor the Forms of Diſputation, nor pretended to any *Demonſtration*, but the *Demonſtration of the Spirit*: Its Doctrines were propoſed upon Divine Teſtimony and Authority, and expreſſed with that Plainneſs and Simplicity, which are proper to the Aſſertions, and Declarations of God: The *Natural* Man cannot diſcern them: the *Carnal* Mind cannot receive them: Before they were *revealed*, we could not poſſibly have any Apprehenſions of them; after they are *revealed* we cannot comprehend them: We cannot, as in Human Sciences, argue from any *Principles* about them, nor affirm nor deny any thing of them *beſide*, or *beyond* what is *revealed.*

For

For to instance in the *Basis* and Reason of all Revelation, since the *Fall* of Man, or *what* amounts to the same thing, since Men universaly became, and continue to be Transgressors of the Law of God, we may consider the whole *Purpose* and *Counsel of GOD* for the *Redemption* of the World, which is the Peculiar Subject of the *Apostle*'s Discourse in this *Chapter*. *How* can the *Wisdom* of Man proceed? and *what* hath *it* to *do*, but to *believe* and *adore*! For if this gracious *Purpose*, had not been declared, and the whole *Counsel* of God disclosed in the Order and Method of our *Redemption*, the *Reason* of Man could never have *discovered* the *One*, nor the *Heart* of Man ever have *conceived* the *Other*. And now all that Wretched Men can do is either to deny the *Necessity* of such a *Redemption*, or the *Fact*, that we are *so redeemed*, but this is a vain Attempt; for that such a Method of *Redemption* is proposed in the *Scriptures* cannot be *denyed*, and the *Fact* that it was accomplished in the manner there related, cannot be *disproved*, and then the *Necessity* of *it* must in all good Consequence be *acknowledged*. So far as Men have denied the *Fact*, or disputed the *Effect*, they have proceeded either upon the Denyal of *Divine Revelation*, or a Misinterpretation of *it*, but so far as they have argued against the *Necessity* of our *Redemption*, they pretend to have proceeded upon such *Principles*, as the *Light* of *Nature* alone, afforded them; It may be proper therefore to examine what they have advanced upon this *Subject* contrary to the *Apostle*, who hath not instructed us,

as

as *they* do, in the *Words*, *which Man's Wiſdom teacheth.*

Upon Enquiry then we ſhall find, that it is aſſerted by *ſome* who *own*, as well as *others*, who *deny* a *Revelation*, that the *Light* of *Nature* ſhows Men the *way* of *Atoning* for their Sins, That *Repentance* is the *way*, and that *Forgiveneſs* certainly follows upon *it*. So that the *Light* of *Nature* teaches them, that ſome *Atonement* is *neceſſary*, and that *Repentance* is that *Atonement*.

For *thoſe* who *own* a *Revelation* to ſay *this*, if they mean it *Abſolutely* without any other *Terms*, it is inconſiſtent with the *Revelation* they acknowledge, for that *Revelation*, which requires *Repentance*, preſcribes alſo the *Terms*, upon which that *Repentance* ſhall be *accepted*. For *thoſe*, who *deny* a *Revelation* to ſay *this* is not ſo ſtrange, For it is all their *Hope* or *Preſumption* rather, if they have any Regard for *Eternal Happineſs*, or *Miſery*: and for *Both* to *ſay it*, I will add, It is only *ſaying*, it is not *proving*.

The whole Proof reſts upon a *ſuppoſition* that *Sinful Man* of *himſelf* can become *ſuch*, as *he ought to be*, and upon an *Argument* drawn, from the *Goodneſs* of God primarily intending the Happineſs of his Creatures.

As to the *ſuppoſition*, if we examine *it* by *Fact*, we ſhall not find *it* in any Inſtance true: and as to the *Argument*, *it* is urged in ſuch a manner, as to conclude, that becauſe God doth *primarily intend*, *He* muſt *neceſſarily effect* the Happineſs of his Creatures. But this will not follow even from his *Goodneſs*, if that were the only *Attribute He* exerciſed towards Man: For his

Good-

Goodness, which inclines *Him* to *intend* the Happiness of his Creatures, can be understood to *move Him* no further, than to *create* them in *such* a *State*, as makes them *capable* of Happiness, but it doth not *necessarily* oblige Him to *maintain* them in *that State*, nor if they *fall* from it, and *forfeit* it, to *restore* them to it.

This is the Case of all *Moral Agents*, who are *accountable* for their Actions, as they have a *Law* given them to *observe*, and *Facultys* to *discern* the *Rectitude* and *Obligation* of *it*, and are endewed with *Liberty* of determining themselves to the *Observance* or *Violation* of *that* Law. As *Man* therefore is a *free Agent*, and *accountable* for his Actions, he is consequently *obnoxious* to the *Penaltys* of *Transgression*, and there the *Law* of *Nature* leaves him, and the *Light of Nature* leaves it also to the great *Goodness* and *Mercy* of God to *deliver* him, but cannot *discover* that God will *deliver* him, or is *obliged* to *reinstate* him in *His* Favour. If we argue from God's *Goodness* alone, we may say, that unless God intended to pardon *them*, His *Goodness* would not suffer *Men* to transgress; and that a *Being* created for *Happiness* can never in the Event of all be subject to *Misery*: which is indeed their *Argument.*

But when to the *Goodness* of God we joyn his *Justice*, and to the Exercise of *both* upon *sinful Man* we applie the Consideration of his *Wisdom*, then we shall find, that *Justice* may exact the *Penalty*, which *Man* hath wilfuly incurred by his own Choice and Transgression; and the utmost we can suppose is, that as infinite *Good-*

neſs inclines our great Creator to *Mercy*, and infinite *Juſtice* to *Puniſhment*, his own infinite *Wiſdom only* can direct *Him* in what *manner* and *degree* and upon what *Terms* and *Conditions* He will *extend* his *Mercy*, or *inflict* his *Vengeance* on the ſeveral Ranks and Diviſions of *Offenders* in all *Ages* and *Nations* under a more or leſs perfect Knowledge of his *Laws*.

Thus it may be a probable Concluſion, that God will of his great Mercy call Sinners to *Repentance*, but it is no certain Conſequence, that *Repentance* only, ſuch as *Tranſgreſſors* can arrive at, will *atone* the God, whom they have *offended*.

It may be farther conſidered, that the *Light* of *Nature* can ſhew us no Title to *Happineſs*, but what is derived from an *uniform Obedience* to the *Law* of God, and according to our *Natural* Notions of *Juſtice* and *Equity*, it is impoſſible to ſuppoſe, that He who tranſgreſſeth this *Law*, ſhould be in the *ſame* Degree of Favour with God, as He, who *never* tranſgreſſed; or as Himſelf would have been, if He had *never* tranſgreſſed: there is a great difference between a *Partial* and an *Entire* Obedience, ſuppoſing the *Partial* to be occaſioned only by the *neglect* of ſome *Dutys* that were *commanded*, and ſo to extend no further than *Sins* of *Omiſſion*; but there is a much wider Difference between *Obedience* and *Tranſgreſſion*, by the direct *commiſſion* of *Sin* and *violation* of the *Law* in things *prohibited*, and *Natural Light* cannot look upon the *Guilty* and *Diſobedient* to be *equaly* entituled by *Repentance* only to the Favour of God with the

the *Innocent* and *Obedient*, and cannot therefore without some express Assurance certainly conclude, that they will be *accepted* as such.

If we consult the *Wisdom* of Man any further upon this *Point*, we shall find it still more Wavering, and Uncertain, and Inconsistent with itself: Sometimes *this Wisdom* by its *Natural Light* can see an *inseparable Connection* between *Virtue* and *Happiness*, *Vice* and *Misery* even in a Future State, and there indeed it must hold, for in this World the *Connection* is not always *evident*, and the *Distribution* is not *equal* any further, than the *inward Satisfaction* springing in our Minds from a Virtuous Life, and the *inward Uneasiness* and *trouble* rising in our Breasts upon Vicious Practices. This *inequality* is to the *Light* of *Nature* a most *Cogent* Argument for a *Future State* of *Rewards* and *Punishments*, and tho' *it* did not *evidently* conclude to the full Satisfaction of the Ancient *Philosophers*, it was a *ground* of great Comfort and Encouragement to Minds that were Virtuously disposed, and searching after *Truth* with a full Desire and Eagerness to attain *it*.

The *Light* of *Nature*, and the *Words of Man's Wisdom* teach, that *Penaltys* are for the Good even of the Persons who are *punished*, and that God punishes Offenders only *when* and *no further*, than, their Good requireth, that the design of *Punishment* is the Amendment of Sinners, and Infinite Wisdom knows how to *adjust* the *Punishment* to the *Offence*, that it may be *exactly* fitted to produce the desired *Amendment*.

It is true *Punishment* is primarily intended for the *Good* and *Amendment* of Sinners in *this* Life, but it is something strange, that the *Light* of *Nature* should discover it to be so in the *Other.* According to these Discoverys the *Punishments* in another World are only *temporary*, and *future Penaltys* will certainly end in the *future Happiness* of those, on whom they are inflicted; Thus the *Light* of *Nature* discovers a *Purgatory* also: for the State of Sinners in another World, according to their Assertion, is only a State of *Purgation* and *Amendment*, which is a very convenient Doctrine for those, who can make it as gentle as they please, and so this gainful Invention of *Popery* makes *one* Article in the *Deist's Creed.*

It is further suggested at least by the *Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth*, that God is not affected in the least upon his own Account, whether his Laws be observed or not, and wants no *Satisfaction* and *Reparation* of his Honour: It is directly asserted, That *no Man breaks the Divine Laws out of Contempt to his Maker, or imagines he can do GOD any Injury by his Transgressions.*

The Consequence of this should be, that as God is not injured, and no Man sins out of Contempt, and God wants no *Satisfaction*, that there is *no* occasion for *any* Punishment at all, however for no more than conduces to the *Amendment* of the Sinner; and that *Repentance* it self is *unnecessary* so far, as *it* is intended as any *Satisfaction* for our Offences, or any *Reparation* of God's Honour. *This* is the least they can mean by *Repentance*, and if they do not mean some

ſome *Acknowledgment* to GOD as the Party *offended*, and *Sorrow* for having *offended Him*, they mean *Nothing* at all.

That no Man ſins out of Contempt of his Maker is a Poſition that needs only be recited, it is hardly capable of any other Confutation. But ſure Men's Tranſgreſſions are a Contempt of the Divine Authority, and to contemn His Authority is to contemn GOD Himſelf. And altho' ſinful Man is not able to do any Injury to GOD, as one Man may injure another, tho' neither our *Righteouſneſs* can *add* to his *Happineſs*, nor our *Tranſgreſſions detract* from *it*, yet every Tranſgreſſor is injurious to the *Intelligent* Part of the Creation, to which he belongs: he diſturbs the great Rule and Order ſettled for the Government of the World, and muſt therefore be *anſwerable* to the great Lord and Governour of All. In this ſingle reſpect GOD will deal with Men *according* to their *Obſervance* and *Violation* of his Laws, and were it only for the *Proſecution* of the great and wiſe *Ends* of his *Government*, and the *Vindication* of his *Providence* in the *Unequal Diſtribution* of things *here*, *He* will *reward* the *Obedient* and *puniſh* the *Diſobedient*, *every Man according to his Works*.

It is *more* than *inſinuated* that the *Chriſtian* Religion repreſents *Almighty* GOD as a Tyrannical, Cruel Being *full of Wrath and Fury ready to glut himſelf with Revenge for the Injurys he hath ſuffered by the breach of his Laws*.

This is a moſt falſe and Unrighteous Charge on the *Doctrines* of Chriſtianity: The *Scriptures* or rather GOD in the *Scriptures* repreſents

Himſelf as a *GOD of Vengeance*, whoſe *Anger is kindled againſt Sinners*, and whoſe *Juſtice* will moſt ſeverely *puniſh* the *Tranſgreſſors* of his Laws, but the Denunciations are only againſt the *incorrigible* and *obdurate*: otherwiſe to the *good* and *obedient*, and to every *penitent* and *returning Sinner He* appears in the moſt aimiable and endearing Character: [a] *For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men*: He *pardons* with *Pleaſure*, and *puniſhes with Reluctance*: There is nothing but perfect *Harmony* in the Divine Nature: His *Mercy* and *Juſtice* are entirely conſiſtent: Theſe with his other Attributes make up the lovely and adorable *Name* of God, according to the *Stile* Himſelf uſeth in the XXXIV Chapter of *Exodus*. [b] When *the LORD deſcended in the Cloud, and ſtood with Moſes on the Mount and proclaimed the Name of the LORD, And the LORD paſſed by before him and proclaimed: The LORD, the LORD GOD, Merciful and Gracious*; and tho' *He* declares, that *He will by no means clear the Guilty*, that is the *Impenitent*; He proclaims Himſelf at the ſame time to be *Merciful and Gracious, Long-ſuffering, and Abundant in Goodneſs and Truth*. With this fulleſt Aſſurance therefore of his *Juſtice* and *Mercy* we may anſwer the *Appeal*, which *Abraham* made unto Him, [c] *Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do Right?* His *Juſtice* and *Mercy* have each reſpectively their proper Objects, but the Meaſures and Exerciſe of theſe *Attributes* upon *leſſer* and *more* Notorious *Of-*

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a Lam. III. 33. b v. 6, 7. c Gen. XVIII. 25.

fenders,

fenders, upon the *Penitent* and *Obdurate*, cannot, I ſuppoſe be ſettled and adjuſted by the *Light* of *Nature*; nor unleſs we could comprehend the *Wiſdom* of God and all his *Views* in the *Government* of the World, and the *Manifeſtation* of his glorious Attributes to the whole *Intelligent* Creation, could we preſume to pronounce *definitively* upon his Proceedings.

And yet theſe *Patrons* of Natural Light, while they miſrepreſent the *Chriſtian* Doctrine, as making God to appear an *Arbitrary*, *Cruel*, & *Revengeful* Being, do in the moſt Blaſphemous and Outrageous manner, realy charge the Moſt High with *Tyranny*, *Cruelty*, and *Injuſtice*, if *He* proceeds in Puniſhment further than the Limits, they have preſcribed Him, for the Good and Amendment of *Tranſgreſſors*.

God, we know, is a moſt pure and ſimple Being: Neither *Wrath* nor *Pity*, *Love* nor *Hatred*, no *Paſſions* nor *Affections* have any place in the *Divine* Eſſence: But theſe are aſcribed to *Him* by way of accommodation to our Capacitys, as we ſhall ſee in the ſequel of theſe Diſcourſes: We can only conceive the *Tranſactions* of God with Mankind by theſe Shadowings and Analogys; and tho' it be only a *Tropical* Expreſſion, when it is ſaid: *His Anger burneth like Fire*, yet the ſtrongeſt Figures may be too weak to expreſs the Execution of it, and obdurate Sinners may find their Puniſhment to be ſomething more than a *Metaphor*.

Once more according to theſe Men *Obedience* to the Law of Nature is a moſt indiſpenſable Duty, and the *Law it ſelf is previous to and independent*

pendent of the Will of GOD: *It* is founded in the *Fitness* & *Relations*, and the *Eternal Reason* of *things*: and *GOD Himself* (as they love to speak) is *obliged* to *direct all* his *Actions* by these *Rules*: and then it may be a *Question*, whether *GOD Himself* without *Satisfaction* to *Justice* can any more *pardon* the *Offender*, than *He* can *dispence* with the *Obligation* of the *Law*. Those, who take upon them to determine what GOD *must* do, and by a *Law independent* of *Himself*, they say, *He is obliged to do*, hardly leave their Maker in my Opinion any *Room* or *Liberty* to shew *Mercy* upon us *Miserable Sinners*: For *Law*, an *Independent Law*, that *binds* and *obliges* GOD *Himself*, is a *Deaf* and *Inexorable* thing: and if GOD can not *mitigate* it, there is no Application *open*.

These things I have only just mentioned *briefly*, and *incidentaly*, as they came in my way: The fuller *Prosecution* of these Points I leave to *abler* Hands, and shall rather chuse to receive the *Doctrine* of *Reconciliation* in the *Words* of *Scripture*, than *in the Words*, *which Man's Wisdom teacheth*. The Truth is, that from *whatever* Cause it proceeds, [a] *there is not a just Man upon Earth*, *that doth good*, *and sinneth not*: and [b] *in many things we do all offend*. Our *best Works* will not endure a *severe* Examination: our *Repentance* it self is *defective*: and no Man after the most perfect *Repentance* can perform an *Entire Unsinning Obedience*: and who is *He*, that with regard to *Natural Religion* alone dares *rest* his *Happiness* upon his *Obedience*, or *Repentance*, or

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a Eccles. VII. 20. *b* Jam. III. 2.

Both?

Both? If any Doubts ſhould riſe concerning the *Perfection* of our *Obedience*, and the *Sufficiency* of *Repentance alone* unto Salvation, and we ſhould *not* diſcern that *neceſſary* Connection between *Goodneſs* of GOD and the *Pardon* of Sin, we ſhall be the better ſatisfied to find upon *what* Conditions GOD hath promiſed his *Pardon*, and that, when of his infinite *Mercy* He was pleaſed to call Men to *Repentance*, He *provided* at the ſame time a *Satisfaction* to his *Juſtice*, and a *ſupply* for *all* our *Defects* even in the *beſt* Obedience we can pay *Him*. This *merciful Proviſion* is a full *Vindication* of his *Goodneſs*: It extends to *all*, that truly ſeek to pleaſe *Him* according to the *beſt Improvement* of *the Light*, *He* hath afforded *them* under his ſeveral Diſpenſations, in all *Ages* and *Nations* from the *Beginning* to the *End* of the *World*.

And now, by any Light that Nature affords us, or that riſeth from the *Words which Man's Wiſdom teacheth* we are at a *Loſs* about the great and important Doctrine of *Pardon* and *Salvation*: Upon the Principles of Natural Reaſon alone that GOD is obliged to pardon *Sin* without an *Atonement* we cannot pretend: upon what *Satisfaction* we cannot prove: upon a *leſs* or any other than is ſet forth no Man can argue: The Truth is we could not propoſe any Terms of Pardon *Before*, we can propoſe no other *Now*: All the Hopes the World ever entertained, was upon the Foot of ſome *Atonement*: The Agreement of Mankind in this Opinion is an Argument either of the *Voice* of *Nature*, or of an *Original Revelation*: let our Adverſarys chuſe

which

which part they pleaſe: the firſt I think they cannot, and for the ſake of certain Conſequences they will not: The ancient *Sacrifices* ſhow, that an Expectation of Pardon had at ſome time been given. No one, but the ſame GOD who gave it, could diſcover how it was to be effected.

Shall we pretend to reaſon againſt the Doctrine of our Redemption from any Topics drawn from the *Writings* of the *Moraliſts*, or from the *Maxims* of *Civil* Laws? can we preſume to ſay upon what Conditions alone GOD may, much leſs that upon any other he will pardon us? It is in GOD to appoint the Satisfaction on his part, and the Conditions on ours: and therefore they, who deny *revealed* Religion abjure the Pardon offered: They, who deny our *Saviour*'s *Satisfaction*, have no grounds to hope it; and thoſe, who vacate that *Satisfaction* by taking from its *Infinite* and *Ineſtimable Value*, do by Conſequence deny it: The *firſt* is the Caſe of the *Deiſts*, the *ſecond* of the *Socinians*, the *third* of the *Arians*, who argue as much againſt the *Perſon* that made *it*, as the *Socinians* againſt the *Satisfaction* that is made.

If we paſs therefore from the Counſel of GOD to the *Revelation* which followed upon it, and behold the Scene opened, which diſcloſeth to us ſo far, as is neceſſary for us to know, how this mighty Work was accompliſhed, we ſee the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*: all the great and glorious *Myſterys* of our Faith diſplayed to our View in all the ſeveral Points *revealed* and taught concerning theſe Sublime and Incomprehenſible Truths.

But then from any *Principles* of *Human* Science, or *Natural* Philosophy, or *Metaphysical* Abstractions are we capable of arguing to the *Divine* Nature? *What it Is*: *How it exists*: and can we upon the grounds of *Human Reason* pronounce it a *Contradiction* for *Three Persons to subsist in One Eternal Essence*? In *Human Relations* it is so far from a *Contradiction*, that there is a *Necessity* for the *Son* to be of the *same* Nature with the *Father*: In *Divine*, it is a *Contradiction* to say the *Essence* is *divided*. There is no just Reasoning from *Human Unity* to *Divine*, nor can we say upon our own Notions of *Unity* that *Distinction* is *Inconsistent* with *it*: Every Man is *One* under a *greater* Distinction in his Nature, than the *Divine Essence* can admit of: His *Unity* is composed of *contrary Principles* even of *Body* and *Soul* and *Spirit*, and the *Spiritual* Part of our Nature is *One* under such *Distinctions* as cannot agree to the *Divine*; Our Spirits are capable of several *Adventitious Additions*, as *Goodness*, *Wisdom* and *Knowledge*, which are *seated* in it as *Accidents* in their *Subjects*, and may be *separated* from it. But God *Is what He Is Essentialy*, and with God it is the same thing to *Be*, and to be *Omniscient*, *Wise* and *Good*. And as we cannot conceive nor express the *Divine Unity* but *improperly* by some Notions borrowed from *Numbers* and *Individuals*, we cannot argue that the *Relations* revealed in it do *destroy* it.

To deny the *Son* to be of the *same* Nature with the *Father*, is to deny that He is the *Son*, and *admitting* the *Proper Relation* there is no *dividing* the *Essence*: Thus the *Arians*, and all others,

others, who argue from *Human* Relations to *Divine*, either ſtrictly or figuratively muſt neceſſarily contradict the *revealed* Truths, and deny the *Perſons*, or elſe make them *three GODS*, or *one GOD* and *two Creatures*.

Theſe and many other *Abſurditys*, even every *Hereſy*, take their Riſe and Spring from reaſoning after the manner of Men upon the *Revelations* of God. We have not the ſame Comprehenſion of *Divine* Truths, as we have of *Human*: nor do we arrive at them in the ſame way. We have no proper and direct, much leſs adequate *Ideas*: We know not the *Divine* Nature, as *it Is* in itſelf: in its Attributes and manner of ſubſiſting: We have no proper Conceptions of *Eternity* and *Omnipreſence*, and what is *Infinite* neceſſarily exceedeth our largeſt Apprehenſions.

It will be ſaid perhaps, hath *Reaſon* then *nothing* to do with *Revelation*? muſt we not examine the Doctrines by certain Rules? and are not we Judges, whether they be True, and in what ſenſe they are ſo?

1. To which I anſwer, That *Reaſon* hath much to do, and is nearly concerned with *Revelation*, that the *Revelation* is made and addreſſed to our *Reaſon*: God ſuppoſes we underſtand ſo far, as He requireth us to believe, tho' in what is required there is ſomething Incomprehenſible, as in the *Being* of God *Himſelf*, and in every one of his *Attributes*. Here the vain Scoffer can take no Advantage, nor find any Abſurdity and Inconſiſtency to ſport with, For of God we muſt acknowledge that *He Is*, and that He is *Incomprehenſible*: This we muſt

must agree in before we can be said to believe in Him at all, and when we believe the *One*, the more we think of it, we are convinced of the *Other*.

Thus *Reason* judgeth of the *Truth* of *Revelation*, not by comprehending the *Doctrines*, but by understanding the *Propositions* according to the common Signification and Construction of the Words, neither straining plain Expressions to a *Figurative* and *improper* Sense, nor *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Expressions *to a Strict* and *Literal* Meaning. What is revealed we understand as a *Fact* declared to the World in the same manner, and Propriety of the Terms that we understand any other Proposition, which relates and asserts any other *Fact*: When we *assent* to the *Eternity*, *Omniscience*, and *Omnipotence* of GOD, we *assent* to so many *Facts*, and at the same time *confess*, that we do not *comprehend* them: We can *comprehend* indeed, that GOD *must be Eternal*, *Omniscient*, *Omnipotent*, but *Eternity*, *Omniscience* and *Omnipotence* we *cannot comprehend*. We can likewise *comprehend* as *Fact*, that CHRIST is the SON of GOD: that *He existed* from all *Eternity*, and that *He* is of the same *Nature* and *Essence*, and *One* with the *Father*: But the *Eternal Generation* it self and the *Manner* of the *Divine Unity* we *cannot comprehend*.

2. *Reason* is *Judge* of the *Truth*, and of the *Sense* of any *Proposition*, but then, if we deny the *Truth* of a *Proposition* we must prove it to be *false*, or at least *doubtful*, and not *evidently* true. In *Propositions* delivering *Divine* Truths, if we would prove them to be *false*, we must do it upon

upon the Account either of ſome *Moral Imperfection*, or *Natural Impoſſibility*, or *Logical Contradiction*. In the great *Articles* of *Revelation* no *Moral Imperfection* is pretended, and no *Impoſſibility* or *Contradiction* can be proved, till it can firſt be proved, that *Reaſon* hath a full *Comprehenſion* of the *Divine Nature* and *Operations*: and then every *Senſe* put upon theſe *Propoſitions*, which implies either *Impoſſibility*, or *Contradictions* muſt be *Falſe*.

3. *Reaſon* is *Judge* not only of the *Senſe*, ſo, as to *diſcern* and *defend* the *true* Meaning, and to *detect*, and *confute* a *falſe* one, but alſo of the *Evidence*, wherewith theſe *Divine Truths* are delivered to the World: For theſe *Truths* being of the laſt Importance to the Salvation of Mankind, of *thoſe* eſpecialy, to *whom* they are propoſed, it hath pleaſed God of his great Mercy and Condeſcenſion to conſider the Depravity, Weakneſs and Prejudices of ſinful Men, and therefore to give *Teſtimony* to his *Revelations*, and to introduce *them* into the World with ſuch an *Evidence*, as is ſufficient to awaken *Attention*, and to convince the *Judgment*: This *Teſtimony Reaſon* was *Judge* of *then*, and of the *Evidence* and *Proofs*, that ſuch *Teſtimony* was given, *Reaſon* is *Now*, and *Ever* will be the *Judge*: Here again it greatly concerneth all Men, who examine into *Truth*, to place the *Evidence* in the faireſt *Light*, to weigh it truly, and to judge impartialy, for if the *Evidence* cannot be diſproved, that is if it cannot be ſhow'd, that it is *falſe* in *Fact*, or *defective* in *Kind*, thoſe are inexcuſable who reject it, eſpecialy thoſe, who

who *first raise Cavils* against it, and afterwards *yield* to their own *Objections.*

4. My further Answer is, that we *may* and *ought* to examine the Doctrines, as we are to [a] *try the Spirits, whether they be of GOD*: and besides the *Rules* I have mentioned, which relate to *those*, to whom the Gospel is proposed for their Conversion to the Faith: as whether there be any *Moral Imperfection*, *Impossibility* or *Contradiction* in the *Doctrines*, or any *Defect* in the *Evidence*; there are other Rules also given for *those*, who have embraced the *Faith* to *examine* the *Doctrines*, and to *try the Spirits, whether they be of GOD*, These are necessary for our *Preservation* and *Continuance* in the *Faith*, that we may be able to discover all *false* Doctrines, and all *false* Pretensions to the *Spirit*, even every *Heretical Innovation*, and *Perversion* of the *Faith.* The *Rules* are partly laid down in the *Scriptures*, and others conformable to them have been given and pursued as *Heresys* arose in the several *Ages* of the *Church.* One *Rule*, and that a *Fundamental One* is here subjoyned to the *Text*, viz. the *Comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual*: and another *Rule*, whereby to *try the Spirits* is given by St *John* [b] *Beloved, believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits, whether they be of GOD. Hereby know ye the Spirit of GOD. Every Spirit that confesseth, that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is of GOD. And every Spirit, that confesseth not, that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is not of GOD. This is that Spirit of Antichrist*: and

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[a] John IV. 1. [b] 1 John IV. 1, 2, 3.

as

as it followeth, [a] *hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error.* If we will *accept* the *Injunction*, we muſt take the *Rule* along with it, and it is a Contradiction to *try the Spirits* and *deny the Goſpel.* [b] *He that believeth on the Son of GOD, hath the Witneſs in Himſelf: He that believeth not GOD, hath made Him a Liar, becauſe he believeth not the Record that GOD gave of his Son*: *Theſe* are the *Rules*, according to *theſe* we are to *judge*, and they will never deceive us; But to judge of things *Divine* as we do of *Human*, to argue ſtrictly from one Caſe to the *other*, and to proceed upon this *Fundamental* Error, that *Reaſon* is the Adequate *Judge* of *Revelation* ſo far, as to explain *it* in ſeveral different ſenſes, every Man for *himſelf*, when it is realy *inexplicable*, muſt be, as it hath ever been, an inexhauſtible Source of *Hereſie*, and proves in the ſtrongeſt Terms, that tho' we are to *judge*, we muſt *judge* by proper *Rules*, and that we cannot *believe aright*, unleſs we *agree* in *one Uniform* and *Determinate Judgment*. *Reaſon* is *Judge* within her own *Compaſs* and *Comprehenſion*, To all *beyond* we muſt *ſubmit*, and upon proper *Evidence*, that the Doctrines are of GOD we muſt *believe*, and the ſureſt *Tryal* and *Teſt* of the *Spirits* is *Faith* in the *Revelation*. This ever diſcovered the *Spirit of Truth* from the *Spirit of Error*, from *Cerinthus* to *Arius*, from *Arius* to *Socinus*, and from *Socinus* to *Arius* again, as his *Hereſie* is now *revived* and *propagated* among us.

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a 1 John IV. 6. *b* 1 John V. 10.

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Every Deviation from the Primary and Obvious ſenſe of the Scripture Propoſition will be a Deviation alſo from its Language, and when we begin to argue upon Divine Subjects as we do upon Human, we muſt neceſſarily *ſpeak in the Words, which Man's Wiſdom teacheth.* Man's Wiſdom can ſee no Difference between three Perſons, and three Intelligent Agents, and conſequently none between three Perſons and three Individuals: *Man's* Wiſdom reaſoneth from Human Exiſtence to Divine, and cannot conceive that the Father and the Son in the Divine Nature are of the ſame Eſſence, tho' Father and Son are confeſſedly *So* in the Human: and Man's Wiſdom will teach, that Father and Son are two diſtinct Beings, tho' the ſame Reaſon muſt convince us that the Divine Eſſence is, in the ſtricteſt Conception, Indiviſible, Eternal, and One. Thus when the Scriptures record that our Bleſſed Lord declared unto the *Jews*: [a] *I and my Father are One*, and when the Scriptures aſcribe unto Him all the Attributes, and with them the Eſſence of the One True God, Human Wiſdom, becauſe it cannot comprehend the Manner, denieth the Fact, and becauſe the Aſſertions in the firſt View are too plain, and ſtrong to be eluded, Human Wiſdom hath invented a Train of Secondary and Subordinate, Improper and Figurative Interpretations, [b] *Denying the Father and the Son*, as all they, *who deny the Son*, do neceſſarily *deny the Father alſo.*

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a John X. 30. b 1 John II. 22.

It may possibly be objected as it is loudly charged, that we who, defend the Scripture Doctrine, do equaly depart from the Scripture Language, and speak *the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth.* But to this the Answer is Easy. That we hold the Genuin and Native Sense of the Scriptures, and unless this Sense be perverted and denied, we need not any other Expressions, whereas those, who deny the Doctrine, must necessarily change the Language too. Take the several Doctrines of the *Gnostics* and *Nicolaitans*, of *Ebion* and *Cerinthus*, those first and earliest *Heretics*, and together with them let us compare the Doctrine and Defences of the Apostles, and we shall find the *Primitive Fathers* maintaining the same Doctrine with the *Apostles*, against these, and succeeding *Heresies*, that sprung up from them, or were grafted on them: The *Apostles* Defences are very *Scripture* themselves: The Defences of the *Fathers* are plain Assertions and Proofs of the *Scripture* Doctrine in such Terms, as the Subtilty, Craft, and Subterfuges of the several *Sects* of *Heretics* made it necessary for them to use: They were forced to reason indeed in Words different from the *Scripture*, but the Terms, they used were only opposed to *those* Terms, which the Broachers of *Novel* Doctrines had invented. Not to enter into a Detail of this Matter, it will be sufficient to insist on this one Instance only, That the *Arians* devising the Term ὁμοιούσιον, brought the *Catholics* under a Necessity of encountering them with the Term ὁμοούσιον, to maintain the ancient Doctrine

that

that the *Son* is of the *ſame* Subſtance and Eſſence with the *Father*; For otherwiſe being only of a *Like* might imply being of a *Different* Subſtance, and no more, than that, as Man had been, *He* was alſo made in the Image of God. The Term ομοούσιος had been uſed before, and the great Care and Deliberation of the Fathers in pitching upon it on this Occaſion, evidently ſhews what the *Catholic* Doctrine was, as expreſſed in ſeveral Equivalent Terms conformable to the firſt and genuine ſenſe of the *Scriptures*. And therefore thoſe *Propoſitions* and *Paſſages*, we meet with in the Writings of the *Fathers* concerning the True and proper *Relation*, *Divinity*, *Incarnation*, *Sufferings*, and *Reſurrection* of the *Son*, whether *Doctrinaly* delivered, or *Defenſively* urged for the Maintenance of the great Scripture Truths, are *not* to be looked upon, as the *Words*, *which Man's Wiſdom teacheth.*

I proceed therefore in the Second place,

II. To ſhow *Poſitively*, how the Things of God are to be underſtood, Namely, that they are to be taught and received, underſtood and interpreted in a Manner proper and peculiar to themſelves, or as the Apoſtle expreſſes it, they are to be taught *in the Words*, *which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth.*

The *Heathen* Poets both made their *Gods*, and in ſome Inſtances invented alſo a Language peculiar for them different from the Language upon Earth. But Our God, the Living and True God, hath not, as I have obſerved be-

fore, uſed a new Language to convey his *Revelations*, nor hath *He* given us new Facultys to receive them: *He* makes uſe of the Common Language of Men, and delivereth *Himſelf* in the Common Terms of Speaking, adapted to our Common Notions and Apprehenſions of things: *He* complieth with the *Vulgar* Opinions, and conformeth to the *Popular* Notions, when He ſpeaketh of this Earth, and the World about us: He condeſcendeth to ſpeak of *Himſelf* alſo after the manner of Men, and to repreſent his own Attributes under ſeveral *Images* and *Symbols* borrowed from the Soul and Body of Man: His *Goodneſs*, *Mercy* and *Juſtice* are repreſented according to our *Moral* Notions: His *Wiſdom* and *Power* according to the *Counſels* and *Actions* of Men: and *He* taketh upon *Himſelf* all our *Paſſions* and *Affections*, when He would ſet forth and repreſent unto us his Tranſactions with with Mankind.

But at the ſame time GOD *revealeth* Himſelf to us in this manner, we are inſtructed not to conceive of Him in the *groſs* and *literal* ſenſe of theſe Expreſſions: Even our Intellectual Facultys, which bear ſome nearer Reſemblance, as they are in ſome *ſenſe* the *Image* of GOD, are nevertheleſs infinitely inadequate Repreſentations of the Divine Wiſdom and Knowledge. [a] *To whom then will ye liken* GOD? *or with what likeneſs will ye compare Him?* ſaith the Prophet *Iſaiah*. [b] GOD *is not a Man, that He ſhould lie, nor the Son of Man, that He ſhould repent*: So

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a Iſai. XL. 18. *b* Numb. XXIII. 19.

much

much *Balaam* truly pronounces of the *Almighty*. [a] *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the* LORD: and the Difference is in some measure shown at the following verse, tho' it be indeed infinitely greater, than even those words do express, [b] *For as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are my Ways higher than your Ways, and my Thoughts than your Thoughts.* So great the Difference, that to say He *thinketh*, is to speak *improperly*, and that He *thinketh* as we do, most *absurdly*. For *what* is our *Thought*, but *Labour*, and *Study*, and *Recollection* proceeding indeed from the Soul or Spirit, but working in Conjunction with the Body.

Thus are the Divine *Presence* and *Operations* also, represented under sensible *Images* and *Symbols* familiar to us, because under those *Adumbrations* only are we able to form any Conceptions of *Them*: These *Images* and these *Symbols* must therefore convince us, that they are only faint Shadows and distant Representations of an Eternal and Incomprehensible *Being*.

But led away with gross Apprehensions *Nature* hath erred, and our boasted *Reason* hath wandered into every *Species* of *Idolatry*, from the *Hosts* of *Heaven* unto the *Beasts* of the *Earth*; and according to the *Symbols* and Representations borrowed from Man, most Nations have also conceived the *Deity* as in a Human Form: It is thus indeed that the *Son* especialy, the *Second Person* of the Blessed *Trinity*, appeared to the *Patriarchs*, and thus as such is He spoken

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a Isa. LV. 8. *b* v. 9.

of, as if indeed He were *then already incarnate*: *Then alone* to be adored in those more familiar Conversations with Men, and *Now* He hath realy assumed the *Human Nature* into the *Divine*, still *alone* of all in *Human* Form to be adored.

But God's having appeared in our Likeness, and spoken of Himself in our Language, this led not Men into any Mistake: and when He vouchsafed to appear in Human Form, they were sufficiently guarded against *Idolatry* by the *Schechinah* and the *Glory*, which always attended his visible Appearances: but they were perverted by making sensible Representations of these Appearances, and [a] *changing the Glory of the Uncorruptible* God *into an image made like to corruptible Man*, and *to Birds, and Fourfooted Beasts, and creeping Things*, and particularly into the Similitude of a *Calf* [b] *that eateth hay*,: This last was the Absurdity of the *Israelites* themselves, but borrowed, as it should seem, from the * *Egyptians*: The *Egyptians* were the great

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a Rom. I. 23. *b* Psalm CVI. 20.

* See the most Learned Bp *Cumberland*'s Book entituled *Sanchoniatho*'s *Phœnician History &c.* See also Mr *Bedford*'s Animadversions on Sir *Is. Newton*'s Chronology pag. 18 to 25. and more especialy his Scripture *Chronology*, Book IV. Chap. V. to page 447. confuting Sir *Is. Newton*'s Notion that *Shisack* is *Sesostris*. Concerning *Thoth* see Book I. Ch.VI. p. 57, 67, 73. Ch.VII. §. 1. B. II. Ch. VI. §. 85, 86, 114, 129, 131, 132, 133, 141, 142, 143, 144, 151. See also §. 155, 182. Concerning *Letters* see Book V. Ch. II. p. 493, &c. Concerning *Osiris* represented by an Ox, see B. II. Ch. VI. §. 174, 177.

These are some of the Authoritys, by which I can justify the Assertions referred to, which I first delivered, as the True and General Opinion, but since the Preaching of these Sermons I find the State of Religion in the first Ages after the Flood very differently

Minters of *Idolatry*,* and as they had invented *Hieroglyphical* Characters of Birds and Beasts, and Plants, and Insects to express the *Deity*,

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rently represented from what I apprehended it to have been. For tho' the True Religion continued with *Noah*, and *Shem*, and in his Line to *Abraham*, and might possibly continue for some time in other Familys, those especialy propagated from *Abraham*, and *Jacob*, yet what I assert is, that *Idolatry* soon prevailed, if worshipping any Objects besides the Creator is properly called Idolatry, whether they were Men Deified, or the Host of Heaven, especialy the *Sun*, who seems the King and Leader of them all: Even *Abraham's* Family began to be corrupted, and that the True Religion did afterwards revive and prevail for a time in any other parts of the World is owing, as I said, to his Descendants from *Ishmael* and the Children of *Keturah*, and to the Descendants of *Esau*; But notwithstanding these, excepting his Offspring, the Charge of Idolatry may very justly be General, and particularly it is True, what I have charged upon *Egypt*. For *Ham* was the Father of Idolatry after the Flood: The *Apis* represented *Osiris* the Son of *Ham*; and it is very probable, that the Children of *Israel* borrowed their *Golden Calf* from the *Apis*, tho' they did not by their *Calf* design to represent the *Egyptian Osiris*, but their *own* the Living and true GOD: They used it as a *Symbol* of the GOD, who brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*, and excelled, as they might think, the *Egyptian Osiris*, as much as *Moses*'s Rod was more *Potent*, than those of the Magicians. But however that may be, for I will not enter into Conjectural Disputes, nor insist, that possibly they had never seen any other visible Representation of a Deity, yet when we have nothing better, I may offer Conjectures still, and if *Aaron* did not copy from the *Egyptian Bull*, yet possibly he could not devise any Image more probable, considering the Figures of the Cherubims, especialy if he knew what *Ezekiel* saw afterwards in his Vision. Chap. I. (and perhaps of old there might have been such an Appearance) That among the four Faces of the four Living Creatures, One of them was the Face of an *Ox*. The *Jews* certainly apprehended some *Propriety* in this *Symbol*, since we find, that notwithstanding the Displeasure of GOD and the Destruction of the Golden Calf in the Wilderness, *Jerobaam* many Years after set up two Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*, and said, *Behold thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt.* 1 *Kings* XII. 28, 29. It may be proper to add that according to the *Bishop* and Mr *Bedford*, in their Judgment upon ancient History, *Osiris* was the Father of Husbandry, and Deified by his Son THOTH or *Orus* according to the References above: and that Plowing with Oxen was known and used in *Egypt* much earlier,

than

they came at last to ascribe *Divinity* to their Leeks, and Worms, and Monkeys, and to adore even the *Images* of the Things, which they had Substituted, whereas *we ought not to think, that the GOD-Head is like to the most glorious Creatures, much less to such groveling abject things, or* [a] *unto Gold, or Silver, and Stone graven by Art and Mans Device.*

This Caution concerning the *Divine Nature* and *Attributes* will teach us, how to understand all other parts of *Divine Revelation*, and then according to those *Conceptions* and Representations, in which God Himself hath set forth the *Divine Nature* and *Attributes*, we are in the same way of *Analogy* and Correspondence of the Terms to understand and interpret all those Truths concerning the *Deity*, which are simply knowable by *Revelation* only. Thus the same *Analogy*, which at once conveyeth to us and secures the *Divine* Nature and Perfections, that we conceive not meanly and unworthily of them, will secure us also in Conceiving all the *Mysterys* of pure *Revelation*, whether they relate to the *Persons revealed*, or to the *Acts* of our *Redemption.*

As that *Language* and those *Symbols*, in which God's *Goodness*, and *Wisdom*, and *Power* are represented, do express what is Real, and Excellent in the *Divine* Nature: That He is Realy

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than hath been suggested, we may gather from that Prohibition in the Book of *Deuteronomy*. Ch. XXII. 10. *Thou shalt not plow with an Ox, and an Ass.* And for the Antiquity of *Letters* by the by, we may consult the Ancient Story together with the *Bishop* and Mr *Bedford*. See the *References*. [a] Acts XVII. 29.

and

and Superlatively Powerful, Wise, and Good beyond all, that we can conceive or express, all the *Divine Relations* are likewise as *Real*, according to the Names, they are called by, as are the Goodness, and Wisdom, and Power of God: And then as the *Relation* is *Real*, the *Essence* must necessarily be *One* and the *Same*. As concerning the Divine *Attributes*, nothing must be admitted, that will debase them to the Imperfections of Men, so in conceiving of the Divine *Relations*, nothing must be admitted, but what is agreeable to the Divine Nature: For tho' the *Relation* be as real, as among Men, yet at the same time, that we assert, that in the *Unity* of the God-Head there are *Three Persons*, we do unavoidably assert *them* to be also of *One Substance*, of the *same Essence*, *Power* and *Eternity*.

It will be of excellent use therefore for the right understanding and interpreting those *Scriptures*, in which the great *Mysterys* of our *Faith* are delivered to consider this twofold Analogy.

1. The Analogy of Language,
2. And the Analogy of *Faith*.

The Analogy of Language answering to the Manner of the *Apostle*'s speaking, *in the Words which the Holy Ghost teacheth*: The Analogy of Faith answering that most excellent Rule He goeth by, of *Comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual*.

In the remainder of this Discourse, as also in the next, I shall first explain more distinctly,

ly, and then more particularly applie these two Rules of Interpretation, each severaly by it self.

1. For the Analogy of Language, and the explication of it, *Which things also we Speak, Not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.*

For since we are not able to express the *Almighty*, as He is in Himself, infinite and inscrutable in his Nature and Perfections, and [a] *Wonderfull in his Works towards the Children of Men*, we are forced to conceive and speak of Him in such *Language*, and according to such *Notions* as we are able to form, or rather *such* as Himself hath taught us to form and accommodate unto Him: In this *Accommodation* consisteth the *Analogy* of *Language*, and according to the *Correspondence* it beareth to the Divine Nature and Operations, it is to be understood in a more *proper*, or more *Figurative* sense.

For our more orderly Proceeding therefore, it may be necessary to consider the several ways God is pleased to represent Himself unto us in the *Scriptures*: both when He speaketh of Himself, and when He speaketh by the *Prophets*, or is spoken of by the *Sacred* Writers. For sometimes God speaketh of Himself and is spoken of in a *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* manner: Sometimes in an *Emblematical* or *Symbolical* way: Sometimes in a *true* and proper *Analogy*.

1. The *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* way of speaking is not used for *Instruction* and *Infor-*

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[a] Psal. CVII. 8, &c.

mation,

mation, but for *Ornament and Illuſtration*: It ſuppoſeth a *previous* Knowledge of the Things to which it is applied, and expreſſeth the *Manner*, or giveth the *Deſcription* of any thing under ſome borrowed Forms, which ſet it off, and paint it in more lively Colours.

But in ſpeaking of the great God we muſt obſerve that thoſe *Forms* of Speech, which exalt other *Subjects*, cannot reach the Greatneſs and Dignity of *Divine*: And all Language muſt fail, where the nobleſt Imagination ſinks under the Weight and Glory of its Contemplations: Tho' it hath pleaſed God to inſpire the *Sacred* Writers with the moſt ſublime, that is with the moſt proper Expreſſions, theſe do rather ſpeak the *Lowneſs* of our Capacitys, than in any degree the *Height* of his Perfections, and the loftieſt Style, while it ſerveth to raiſe our Thoughts, is yet with all its Pomp no more, than a Debaſement of his *Majeſty*, bringing it down tho' to the nobleſt of them, yet ſtill to our Thoughts and Apprehenſions: The Mind of Man is too weak to conceive, and not able to bear a brighter diſplay of his Glory: and as no words can give us *Equal*, it is the great Goodneſs of God in the Holy Scriptures to give us *worthy* Conceptions even in the eaſieſt and moſt obvious expreſſions of Him.

The *Figures* therefore employed to expreſs the *Divine* Nature and Actions may be conſidered as more *Lofty* and more *Familiar*: The more *exalted* ſetting forth his Majeſty and Glory: the more *Familiar* the ſettled order of his Providence, and his Tranſactions with the Sons of Men.

With

With reference to the firſt, the *Eighteenth Pſalm* deſcribing his Victorious Preſence with his ſervant *David*, ſpeaketh of Him in the Higheſt and Strongeſt *Figures*, in that ſublime enarration of his Terror and Glory, and Triumphant Proceſſion from the *ſixth* to the *ſixteenth* verſe: and yet we may obſerve, that this exceeds not the bare [a] Hiſtorical Account of our LORD's deſcending upon * Mount *Sinai*, where

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a Exod. XIX.

* I have ſubjoined the ſeveral Paſſages, rather than recite them in the Body of the Diſcourſe, and have placed the Hiſtorical Fact between the Figurative Deſcriptions, that the Reader may ſee how far the Strongeſt and Sublimeſt Figures are from exceeding the Truth and Terrors of the Divine Preſence among his People.

Pſal. XVIII.
The Figurative Deſcription.

7 *The Earth ſhook and trembled, the Foundations alſo of the Hills moved, and were ſhaken, becauſe he was wroth.*

8 *There went up a ſmoke out of his Noſtrils: and Fire out of his Mouth devoured: Coals were kindled by it.*

9 *He bowed the Heavens alſo, and came down: and darkneſs was under his feet:*

10 *And he rode upon a Cherub, and did flie: yea he did flie upon the Wings of the Wind.*

11 *He made Darkneſs his ſecret place: His Pavilion round about him were dark Waters & thick clouds of the Skies.*

12 *At the Bright*

Exod. XIX.
The Literal Narration.

16 *And it came to paſs on the third day in the Morning, that there were Thunders, and Lightnings, and a thick Cloud upon the Mount, and the Voice of the Trumpet exceeding loud, ſo that all the People, that was in the Camp trembled.*

18 *And Mount Sinai was altogether on a Smoke, becauſe the Lord deſcended upon it in Fire: and the Smoke thereof aſcended as the Smoke of a Furnace, and the whole Mount quaked greatly.*

[*And the Mountain burnt with Fire unto the midſt of Heaven with Darkneſs, Clouds, and*

Habakkuk III.
The Figurative Deſcription.

3 *GOD came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah His Glory covered the Heavens, and the Earth was full of his Praiſe.*

4 *And his Brightneſs was as the Light: he had Horns* coming *out of his Hand, and there was the hiding of his Power.*

5 *Before him went the Peſtilence: and burning Coals went forth at his Feet.*

6 *He ſtood and meaſured the Earth: He beheld and drove aſunder the Nations, and the everlaſting Mountains were ſcattered: the perpetual Hills did bow:*

neſs,

no Figure is employ'd to highten, what in Fact was ſo Great and Dreadful. Nor is that Wonderful Sublime Deſcription in the Prophet *Habakkuk*, tho' it riſes above all Human Imagination, a full Diſplay of his tranſcendent Glory: To theſe we may add thoſe exalted Paſſages in the Book of [a] *Job*, and other parts of the Scripture, which deſcribe his Greatneſs, and Majeſty, and Power, but all theſe cannot expreſs, what our Thoughts are not able to conceive.

With reſpect to the ſecond thing ſetting forth GOD's *Providence* in the Care and Defence, and Protection of his Servants, He is called in

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neſs, that was before Him, his thick Clouds paſſed, Hailſtones, and Coals of Fire.

13 *The Lord alſo thundered in the Heavens: and the Higheſt gave his Voice: Hailſtones, and Coals of Fire.*

14 *Yea he ſent out his Arrows, and ſcattered them: and he ſhot out Lightnings, and diſcomfited them.*

15 *Then the Channels of Waters were ſeen, and the Foundations were diſcovered: at thy Rebuke, O Lord, at the blaſt of the Breath of thy Noſtrils.*

thick Darkneſs: And the Lord ſpake unto you out of the midſt of the Fire — Deut. IV. 11. 12]

19 *And when the Voice of the Trumpet ſounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moſes ſpake, and GOD anſwered him by a Voice.*

His ways are Everlaſting.

10 *The Mountains ſaw thee and they trembled: the overflowing of the Water paſſed by: the Deep uttered his Voice, and lifted up his Hands on high.*

11 *The Sun and the Moon ſtood ſtill in their Habitation: at the light of thine Arrows they went, and at the ſhining of thy glittering Spear.*

When the Reader hath compared theſe together, and ſeriouſly conſidered the Literal Account of our Lord's appearing upon Mount *Sinai* at the giving of the Law, he may then reflect whether the Deſcription of his laſt Appearance to judge the World, and the Account of the laſt Judgment: the Joys of Heaven: and the Miſerys of Hell be no more than Fable and Figure.

[a] XXXVIII, XXXIX, &c.

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the ſame *Pſalm* I mentioned juſt before [a] our *Rock*: our *Fortreſs*: our *Tower*: our *Buckler*: the *Horn* alſo of our *Salvation*, and our *Refuge*. Theſe are *Figurative* Expreſſions, tho' not ſo ſublime as the former, yet of great Dignity, and however plain, yet no leſs Solemn and Majeſtic; and innumerable of the like kind are obvious throughout the *Scriptures*: Thus alſo with regard to God's Tranſactions with Mankind, His *Eyes*: His *Ears*: and His *Hands*, are uſed *Metaphorically* to ſignify his Providence, his *Knowledge*: his *Regard* to us: and his *Power*: So in the *thirty fourth Pſalm* [b] for his *Providence*: *The Eyes of the Lord are upon the Righteous, and his Ears are open unto their Cry.* *Pſalm* the *eighty ninth* [c] for his *Power*: *Thou haſt a mighty Arm*: *ſtrong is thy Hand, and high is thy right Hand.* *Light* is alſo taken in ſeveral ſenſes and all *Metaphorical.* Sometimes for the *Robes* and *Clothing* of the *Almighty.* [d] *Who covereth himſelf with Light, as with a Garment.* Sometimes for his *Habitation*, [e] *dwelling in the Light, which no Man can approach unto.* Sometimes for our *Guide* and *Defence*: [f] *The Lord is my Light and my Salvation.* Sometimes for *Inſtruction* and *Revelation*: [g] *I am the Light of the World*, ſaith our *Bleſſed Lord.* Sometimes for our *Eternal Happineſs*: [h] *The Lord himſelf ſhall be unto thee an Everlaſting Light, and thy GOD thy Glory.* All theſe Expreſſions are *Figurative* and *Alluſive* only, becauſe they do not expreſs any thing realy *Correſpon-*

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a Pſal. XVIII. 2. *b* v. 15. *c* v 13. *d* Pſ. CIV. 2. *e* 1 Tim. VI. 16. *f* Pſ. XXVII. 1. *g* John. VIII. 12. *h* Iſ. LX. 19.

dent

dent in the great Subject they are applied to, but are used to set forth more sensibly, and in the way of Similitude and Illustration the Action and manner of one thing by another. These *Metaphorical* Expressions are not themselves *Analogical*, but are built upon, and applied to these *Analogical* Conceptions we had before formed of the *Divine* Being: They are the Work of Fancy and Imagination in all *Human* Compositions, varied and applied to the Subjust as the Writer pleaseth, and in *Divine* they are directed, not as necessary to give us proper Notions, but to express the Notions we have in a more Sublime and Beautiful Manner, and therefore tho' these *Metaphorical* Expressions do sometimes carry a Resemblance, yet they do not necessarily imply it; whereas in *Analogy* there is a real Foundation, and God *is* truly *Powerful*, *Wise*, and *Good*, beyond all that we can call so among Men, tho' He hath truly neither *Arms*, nor *Ears*, nor *Eyes*.

2. In *Scripture* God is sometimes spoken of in an *Emblematical* or purely *Symbolical* way: This is more than *Metaphor*, and yet short of *Reality*: *Metaphors* and other Figures are properly no more than a bare *Mode* of Expression, but *Symbols* and *Emblems* are determinate Signs used and appointed to signify something *real* and determinate in the Subject, to which they are applied: Without this Designment they are indeed no more than *Metaphor*; but thus selected and made significative either of the Subject it self, or of some Property of the Subject, to which they are applied, they do there-

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by become *Types* and *Characters* to express them to us. There is no *real* Resemblance or *Correspondence*, but they are invented and imagined sometimes by the Wit of Man, and sometimes they are chosen and made use of by God Himself, to express, not his *Attributes* indeed, as they are in themselves, yet at least the Exercise and Operation of them in the Government of the World and the Superintendency of his Providence. Thus the same Things as they are differently applied may in one Respect be only *Metaphors*, in another they may be *Symbols*, which are of Arbitrary *Application*, as Words are of Arbitrary Signification. Thus the *Power* of God shall be signified by a *Mighty Hand*, and a *Stretched out Arm*: His *Providence* by an *Eye*, and his *Glory* by an *Irradiated Cloud*, and *these*, whether *expressed* or *depicted*: In bare *Metaphors* they are meer *Forms* of Speech: in *Symbols* they stand for *Signs* and *Emblems* of the Things they are applied to. Thus *Light* is *Figurative* to express God's *Glory*: The *Cloud* which descended on the [a] *Tabernacle* was a *Symbol* of his *Presence* and his *Glory*: Thus in the second Book of *Chronicles*, [b] where it is said, *The Eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole Earth*, the Expression is *Metaphorical*: In the third and fourth Chapters of *Zechariah*, [c] where *seven Eyes* are said to be *engraven on One Stone*, and to be the *Eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole Earth*, the Expression is *Symbolical*. Both ways the *Eyes* of the Lord are well chosen Ex-

a Exod. XL. 34. b XVI. 9. c Zech. III. 9. IV. 10.

pressions,

preſſions, or Repreſentations of his *Providence*, his *Omniſcience*, and *Omnipreſence*, as in the Book of *Proverbs*[a] we read, *The Eyes of the Lord are in Every place, beholding the Evil, and the Good.* And altho' theſe Expreſſions and Signs taken from our *Organs* of Senſe and Action are not properly *Analogical*, by reaſon of any *real* Correſpondence between God and *Man*, yet as theſe *Organs* are the means of our attaining to Knowledge: of our exerciſing our Intellectual Powers, and of Providing for Future Events, they do convey ſomething *Analogical* in the *Effect*, as that God heareth us, when we call upon *Him*, that the *Heavens are the Work of his Hand*, and *his Eyes behold all the Children of Men*: We do therefore readily yield, that tho' God is not what the *Metaphor* ſpeaketh Him, or the *Symbol* repreſenteth Him, yet *He* is truly and in a manner infinitely higher, than we can conceive and expreſs, what is meant and intended by theſe *Symbols* and *Metaphors*: that is, *He* is Infinitely *Powerful*, *Wiſe* and *Good*: For *Metaphors* are ſo far from *deſtroying*, that they *ſuppoſe* the *Reality* of the Things to which they are applied.

Even in the great *Myſterys* of our *Faith* a *Metaphorical* Interpretation will ſuppoſe much more, than thoſe who make it, are willing to allow. For granting, as we do, that the Terms *Father*, *Son*, and *Begotten* are not to be underſtood in that *ſtrictneſs* or in the *ſame* manner, when applied to *Divine* Perſons, as they are,

[a] Prov. XV. 3.

when applied to *Human*, yet, if they have any meaning, they must refer to some Subject, and then they imply at least what is equivalent, a *Total Communication* of Nature and Essence from the *First* to the *Second*, and our Adversarys may as well argue against the *Providence*, the *Omniscience* and *Omnipresence* of GOD, because He hath neither *Hands*, nor *Eyes*, nor *Ears*, as against the *Reality* of that *Relation* expressed by the Terms *Father*, *Son*, and *Begotten*, because they are not to be understood in the *strict* and *literal* sense of *Human* Generation, where a Man is procreated from *two* Parents, and makes a *Posterior* and separate *Individual* from *Both*: So in the Terms of *Redemption*, and the *Price* paid for the *Purchase* of that *Redemption*: For the Terms of *Adoption* and *Inheritance* of our being *Heirs of GOD*, and *joynt Heirs with Christ*, tho' the *Price* is not paid exactly as it is for *Captives* among Men, tho' the *Adoption* is not made according to the *Forms* of the *Roman* Law, nor our *Inheritance* conveyed by *Deeds* and *Instruments* of a *Legal Will* and *Testament*, yet the Things signified are *real*, and we are realy delivered from *Bondage* and *Death* upon a *Price* and *Satisfaction* paid, more valuable than the whole World can afford, [a] Even the *Blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot unto GOD for us.* We are realy in the Condition of [b] *Adopted Children*, and [c] *Heirs of an Inheritance Uncorruptible, reserved in Heaven for us.*

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[a] Heb. IX. 14. [b] Rom. VIII. 15, &c. Gal. IV. 5, &c. [c] 1 Pet. I. 4.

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Theſe Expreſſions are more than *Figurative*, and carry in them, as we ſhall ſee under the next Conſideration a true and proper *Analogy*: They have a real Foundation and *Agreement*, and are ſtrictly and properly applied with no other Difference, than there neceſſarily is between *Earthly* and *Heavenly* Things: Our *Inheritance* in *Heaven* is as *real* as an *Inheritance* on *Earth*: the *Reverſion* more *certain*, and the *Poſſeſſion* more *enduring*. *Heaven* is a *place*, as well, as *Earth*, and *Happineſs* and *Glory* may as properly be poſſeſſed in *Heaven*, as *Lands* and *Houſes*, *Riches* and *Honours* upon *Earth*: Our *Redemption* is as *real* from *Miſery*, as it can be from *Captivity*, and our *Redeemer* is *Mighty*: no *Figurative* and Imaginary Perſon: And here the *Reality* of what the *Scripture* aſſerts is Evident throughout the whole Order and Work of our *Redemption*: With regard to the *Father*, and the *Son*, the *Relation* is as *real*, as it is among *Men*, [a] *For GOD ſo loved the World, that He ſent his only begotten Son, who is in the Boſom of the Father, that whoſoever believeth in Him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life.* Here we have the *Real*, even the *Eternal Relation*; and the *Reality* of our *Redemption*, and the *Price* paid for it is no leſs Evident from the Words of St *Peter*, [b] *Foraſmuch as ye were not redeemed with Corruptible things, as Silver, and Gold, but with the precious Blood of Chriſt.*

This brings me to conſider Thirdly,

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[a] John III. 16. I. 18. [b] 1 Pet. I. 18, 19.

3. The true and proper *Analogy*, in which God ſpeaketh of Himſelf, and is ſpoken of in the *Scriptures*.

1. By *Analogy* we do not underſtand the Reſemblances drawn from *Etymology*, nor the Minuteneſſes of *Grammatical* Terminations, nor any Rules of Language delivered by *Varro* and *Cæſar* had we them entire, by *Tully* and *Quintilian*, nor thoſe laid down by any more *modern* Writers: Nor with the *Rhetoricians* do we make it a meer *Figure* or *Tropical* Scheme of Speech, but we take it in the true Logical Senſe, as it is uſed according to the *Proportion* and *Correſpondence*, which is found between *one* thing and *another*, and is ſtrictly *Concluſive*, ſo far as the *Proportion* and *Correſpondence* holds.

In this *Analogy* is founded all our Knowledge of God: his *Perfections*, *Relations*, and *Attributes*. Of theſe we have no direct and immediate *Conceptions*, and we cannot ſo much as *think*, much leſs can we *ſpeak* of them but in the ſame Conceptions and Language, in which we think, and ſpeak of our ſelves and the World about us. We have no Notion of Spiritual Beings, not ſo much as of our own Spirit, but from the Operations of our Mind, and the Conſciouſneſs of what paſſeth within us, and we cannot form any Conceptions of the Divine *Knowledge*, *Underſtanding* and *Will*, but from thoſe we had firſt formed of our *own*.

That theſe Conceptions are *adequate* we cannot preſume, that there is a *real* Correſpondence is certain, and that notwithſtanding the Correſpondence is *real*, God is ſtill *Incomprehenſible*

henſible we muſt acknowledge: For the ſame *Analogy*, which implies an *Agreement* in *ſome* Reſpects evidently inferreth a *Difference* in *others*. The Reſemblance is juſt, ſo far as it holds, and gives us right Apprehenſions of GOD, ſo far as *He* requires us to believe: But our moſt extended Views are *Finite*, and the Nature of our Conceptions gives us the true Termination of the Proſpect. Here we [a] *ſee thro' a Glaſs darkly*, and we know but *in* [b] *part*: till we come *Face to Face*, we ſhall not [c] *ſee Him as He is*. Our Knowledge is *true*, tho' it is only in *Part*; It is *real*, tho' not *perfect*; and not untill *that* which is *perfect is come*, ſhall [d] *that*, *which is in part be done away*. There is an Eſſential Difference between the *Creator* and the *Creature*, and as we can conceive of the *Creator* only by the moſt Excellent Conceptions we can form from the *Creature*, we can conceive of *Him* no further than thoſe Conceptions will reach; As we have obvious Notions of a *Father*, and a *Son*, of *Goodneſs*, *Juſtice* and *Truth*, of *Knowledge*, *Underſtanding* and *Will*, We form our Notions of the Divine *Relations* and *Attributes* accordingly, but the Manner, *how* they are in themſelves is altogether *inconceivable*, and we know no more of them, than is revealed: For whatever the *Light* of *Nature* diſcovereth of the Divine *Attributes*, it only teſtifieth to the Truth of *Revelation*, which diſcovereth them more perfectly, in a moſt gracious Exemplification of them throughout the whole

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a 1 Cor. XIII. 12. *b* v. 9. *c* 1 John III. 2. *d* 1 Corinth. XIII. 10.

Course of God's Transactions, and Communications with Mankind; But still all our Conceptions of God according to *Natural* Religion, or *Revealed*, are formed upon that Analogy and Correspondence which Human Relations, and all created Excellence and Perfection bear, tho' in the smallest Proportion, to the Divine.

By this Correspondence the *Analogy* of Language is distinguished from the *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Schemes of Speech, as it comprehends and expresseth the very Subject of which we discourse, and therefore we shall find the Distinction as clear between the *Metaphorical*, and *Analogical* Language, when applied to Subjects *Supernatural* and *Divine*, as in *Human* Subjects it is between the *Things* we speak of, and the *manner* of our Speaking. It is true, that in the common use of the Terms, the *Figurative* and *Analogical* Language is too much undistinguished, and one is too promiscuously and carelessly taken for the other. *Metaphor* is taken for *Analogy*, because in *Metaphor*, as it is a sort of a shorter Similitude, there is sometimes an Appearance of some Resemblance: And *Analogy* is taken for *Metaphor*, because our Thoughts and Conceptions are transferred from their Primary Subjects; but such transferring is not *Figurative* but *Real*, otherwise we can have no *real* Conceptions of God, and all our Knowledge and Notions of *Him* will be only *Metaphorical*: *Analogy* differeth Essentialy, and Fundamentaly from *Metaphor*, even as Fundamentaly as the *Substance* differeth from its *Accidents*:

Metaphors

Metaphors are taken, if I may ſo ſay, from the thin ſemblance and ſurface of Things, and drawn from their ſenſible and External Pro-pertys, but *Analogy* riſes from the very Nature of Things in their *Real* Agreement and Cor-reſpondence on *both* ſides of the Compariſon. *Metaphors* convey unto us no Knowledge of the Subject, but are applied to thoſe Things, which are previouſly known and determined, and ſo they are *Arbitrary* in their *Application*, and *Ima-ginary* and *Alluſive* only in their Reſemblance; But *Analogy* containeth and expreſſeth the Knowledge, we have of Things Supernatural and Divine, in ſome neceſſary and determinate manner by ſubſtituting our complex Notions of all Sublunary Truth, Excellency, and Glory, to give us juſt Conceptions, and to inform our *Minds* in the Correſpondent Nature of that Truth, Excellency, and Glory, which is Divine. As *Faith* is the [a] *Evidence*, this *Analogy* may be called the *Subſtance of things not ſeen*: But *Meta-phors* are only the Trappings and Decorations of our Language, and are as properly appli-ed to our *Analogical* Conceptions, as to the Things themſelves from which thoſe Concep-tions were taken, and in Divine Subjects we may obſerve, that the Scriptures ſpeak *Meta-phoricaly* of thoſe Attributes, which they had firſt *Analogicaly* conceived. Of God's Good-neſs and Juſtice and Wiſdom and Power, the Conceptions and Language are *Analogical* and *Real*; In ſetting forth the Exerciſe of theſe

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[a] Hebr. XI. 1.

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Attributes the Expreſſions are often *Figurative*, and *Metaphorical.*

This is a ſhort account of that Divine *Analogy* taught us in the *Scriptures*, both as it is in it ſelf, and as it is diſtinguiſhed from the *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Forms of Speech. The *Uſes* of it will appear in every Step we take, and the *Diſtinction* of this *Analogy* from *Metaphor* is of the *laſt* Importance, if we would underſtand any thing *Real* and *Poſitive* in the Divine Nature and Perfections, and thoſe great Points, which are the peculiar Subject of *Revelation.* It is in this View that I propoſe to conſider this *Analogy* of Language, which God Himſelf hath taught us when He is pleaſed to expreſs thoſe Conceptions of Himſelf, which He requires us to entertain in our Thoughts, both as the Subject of our *Meditation*, and the Object of our *Faith.*

By the means then of this Analogy we are able to conceive of thoſe things, which we could otherwiſe frame no Notion of, and expreſs our Conceptions in a borrowed Form, by *tranſferring* thoſe Thoughts and Expreſſions, which are eaſy and Familiar to us, to what is more Difficult and Obſcure, or beyond the reach of our Knowledge any other way, eſpecialy to things Supernatural and *Divine*, of which we can have no direct View, or *Conception*, as they are in *themſelves*, and no further, than the *Analogy* between God and his Creatures can lead us; We muſt firſt from our ſelves and the Creation round about us, be furniſhed with the Knowledge of all that is Good and Excellent

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in the whole compaſs of the *Intellectual* and *Moral* World, and then apply this Knowledge to the Perfections of God: Theſe Notions muſt be ſettled in our Minds, before we can have any conception of the *Divine* Excellence, and without them we can no more imagine or expreſs what the *Divine* Nature is, than a Blind Man can diſcourſe of *Colours*, or a Deaf Man of the *Sound* of a Trumpet.

Thus to form our Notions and Conceptions of God, and in the way up to *Him* of all Spiritual Beings, is properly the Work and Operation of our Mind, by which we firſt apprehend a *Likeneſs* and *Conformity*, and then reaſon by a ſuitable *Parity* from one thing to another, or elſe we proceed in *Number*, *Weight* and *Meaſure*, by *Proportion*, which is alſo *Parity*, and may be called in Argument, as it is in Arithmetic, the *Golden Rule*. This *Analogy* therefore is *ſtrictly Concluſive*, where it is *truly applied*, and there is no more difference in arguing upon *Divine* Subjects and the real *Proportion* of things, than there is between *Mathematical* Demonſtration, and that *Indubitable* Certainty, which is deduced from the higheſt Principles of Reaſon; For tho' the Correſpondence and Proportion be not *Commenſurate* to its Subject, and therefore are not ſtrictly *Univocal*, as the word Man is, which comprehendeth all the *Individuals* of the *Species*, yet it is Entirely *Univocal* on *one* ſide of the Compariſon, and truly *Univocal* alſo, ſo far as the *Correſpondence* holdeth with thoſe things, it is applied to, on the *other*. The higheſt Notions of Excellence and Perfection, tho' they

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are not *commenſurate*, are yet moſt *truly* applied unto God: And the *Analogy* expreſſeth ſomething *Real* and *Determinate*, in Oppoſition to all *Equivocal*, and meer *Figurative* Forms of Speaking, and thus applied to the *Divine* Nature and *Attributes*, tho' it can neither expreſs the *Manner*, nor reach the *Perfection* of them, yet from our beſt Notions of *Goodneſs*, *Wiſdom*, and *Power*, it teacheth us to underſtand, that God is infinitely *Powerful*, *Wiſe*, and *Good* in the moſt *Univocal* and *appropriated* Notions of theſe *Attributes*: So far as we can conceive of God by his Creatures, the *Analogy* holds, and only faileth where being Finite it neceſſarily muſt, in expreſſing the Infinite Perfections and Excellence of the Creator.

In *Human* Subjects we do often ſpeak *Analogicaly*, tho' there be not that Abſolute Neceſſity for it, as there is in *Divine*: For we may ſee and Apprehend the things of this World without the Intervention of *Analogy*: Thus we commonly ſpeak of the *Picture*, as of the Man Himſelf, and of the *Reflection* of any thing in a glaſs, as of the thing it ſelf ſo *reflected*: Thus alſo we ſpeak of *Brutes*, and their Actions in the Terms of our *own*, becauſe of ſome ſemblance, they ſeem to bear to Reaſon, but eſpecialy to the *Paſſions*, *Appetites*, and *Senſations* of Men; tho' in the laſt Inſtance there is no *Diſcurſive Faculty*, nor are their *Paſſions*, *Appetites* and *Senſations* connected with *Reaſon*, as in us: in the other there is only a meer *Reſemblance*, that hath no *Subſtance*, as the *Reflection* of a Face in a Glaſs, or only a meer *ſurface* of Light and Co-

Colours, as in a *Picture*: But in all these Instances we have a true Idea and Apprehension of the Object without *Analogy*, as of a *Man* without seeing a *Picture*, or an *Human Form* reflected in a *Glass*, tho' on the other side without a Previous Idea of a *Man* we could have none of the *Picture* representing *him*: We have also a true Conception of *Reason* without considering the *Instinct* and *Actions* of *Brutes*. Here the *Analogy* descendeth from us to them, we do not learn from them, what *Man* is, but we learn that *Brutes* have some Conformity to *Man* in their *Senses* and *Appetites*, and the *Actions* flowing from them: We learn also that the *Picture* giveth a Likeness, and that the *Glass* reflecteth the *Person*, and every *Motion*, that is practised before it.

But in *Divine* Subjects the Case is exactly the *Reverse*: Here the *Analogy* ascendeth and we fall below the Excellencys of the *Divine* Nature infinitely more, than we excell the *Beasts that perish*, or the *Pictures* and *Images* of our selves, since compared with God we are no more than a *shadow*, and he is in Himself above the Comprehension of Man: Of things belonging to another World we have no proper and direct Ideas, much less can we form any just Conceptions of God, as *He* is in *Himself*, in his *Nature* and *Essence*: For *He* is removed from our Senses, and infinitely beyond the reach of our Intellectual Powers; It is by the *Mediation* of something, we find *Correspondent* in our selves, and the World about us, that we can any ways apprehend *Him*, or form any Conceptions of

Him;

Him; For tho' *He* is infinitely removed from our Senſes, and above our Comprehenſion, yet all our Conceptions of *Him* are derived Originaly from the ſame Principles with our Knowledge of all other things, and more immediately from the Operation of our Mind, and the Determination of our Will in all the Methods of Underſtanding and Action; and particularly from the various Workings of our Thoughts upon all our Simple and Compound *Ideas*, till we ſubſtitute thoſe *Complex* and *Abſtracted* Notions, which we have formed of all Perfection to expreſs ſo far as *Finite* Conceptions can, the *Infinite* Perfections of Almighty God.

Thus we conceive of God's *Exiſtence* in *that* of his Creatures: Of his *Eternity* by taking away from *Duration* all Beginning, and extending it without *End*, as when we ſay, [a] *The Lord endureth for ever*. But then as we can form no Notion of *Exiſtence* and *Eternity*, but from our Conceptions of *created Exiſtence* and *Time*, and as we cannot ſeparate a perpetual ſucceſſion of *Motion* and *Moments* from our Thoughts of *Eternal* Duration, this muſt convince us, that whatever Correſpondence there is between Divine and created *Exiſtence*, and between *Time* and *Eternity*, *Eternity* and *ſelf Exiſtence* are vaſtly different from the *Exiſtence* of all things by *Creation* and in *Time*: And as there are no *Parts* and *Succeſſion* in *Eternity*, there can be no *Difference* of *Exiſtence*, tho' there be a *Diverſity* of *Relations* in the Divine *Eſſence*.

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[a] Pſalm IX. 7.

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So likewiſe we conceive of GOD's *Attributes* in our own Notions of Moral Perfection and Wiſdom and Power, and tho' we have properly no *Idea* of pure Spirit, neither of Angels, nor our ſelves, yet when we come to reflect, and to purſue our Reflections, we ſhall find, that GOD is a Spirit, a pure intellectual *Agent*, if from no other, and many reaſons offer, yet from this alone (and unanſwerable it is) that we ourſelves are *Intelligent Agents*, and then as from a Conſciouſneſs to our ſelves of our own Actions and the Operations of our own Minds, we form ſome Notion of a Spirit, we form our Conceptions alſo of GOD *Himſelf* in ſome *ſimilar* Reaſon, and Proportion, tho' we take this all along into our Conſideration, that *He* is *Infinite* and *Incomprehenſible*.

There is an *Analogy* and Correſpondence more or leſs in an Uninterrupted Gradation throughout the whole Scale and Order of *created* Being: and all this ſerveth only in the moſt Excellent and exalted manner, till from the *lowermoſt* we riſe to the *higheſt* Link of the Chain, to give us ſome true Notions, tho' infinitely *Inadequate* of our great Creator's Unconceivable Nature, and Unutterable Perfections.

Thus the *Creature* leadeth us up to the *Creator*: In the Univerſal *Book* of Nature we read *Him*: and in our own *Minds*, as in a *Mirrour*, we behold *Him*: and if this manner of Thinking and Speaking of *Him* by *Analogy* and the *Subſtitution* of our Conceptions and Language transferred from their *Primary* ſignification con-

conveyeth and expresseth nothing *Real* concerning the Divine Nature, it is impossible to think or to speak of God at all.

But this Rule of *Analogy* will be more clearly understood, when we come,

2. *Secondly* to the Use and Application of it, which I shall propose, as I find it made use of and applied by God Himself in the *Scriptures*.

And here we are to consider the several Views, in which He hath presented *Himself* to Mankind, as *at sundry times*, and *in divers manners He* hath discovered *Himself* unto them.

1. In the first place He acquaints us WHO HE IS, and instructeth us in his *Nature* and *Attributes* so far as we are able to apprehend them.

2. In the next place He revealeth *Himself* as to his Dealings and Transactions with the Sons of Men, both in the *Ordinary* way of his *Providence*, and the *Extraordinary* way of their *Redemption*.

1. As to his *Nature* and *Attributes*, it is revealed, That God is One, and that He subsisteth in Unity of Essence, and Diversity of Relation: that all his *Attributes*, *Natural* and *Moral*, *Communicable* and *Incommunicable*, are so many infinite Perfections constituting One Divine Essence, and possessed *equaly* and *infinitely* by *Each* of the Divine *Relations*.

2. With reference to the Extraordinary way of our Redemption, besides the Early Promises made of a Redeemer, and the frequent Re-

Renewals and Confirmations of it, by declaring first, that [a] *He should be of the Seed of the Woman*: afterwards of the [b] *Seed of Abraham*, and of the [c] *House* and *Lineage of David*, and that a [d] *Virgin* should bear *Him*: together with the *Time* [e] *When*, and the *Place* [f] *Where*, He *should be born*. It is also revealed, that this *Redeemer* is [g] *Immanuel*, *GOD with us*: the [h] *Mighty GOD*, the *Everlasting Father*, the *Prince of Peace*: the [i] *only Begotten Son*: [k] *One with the Father*: that in the *fulness of Time* this *Son* of GOD was [l] made *Man*, and became our *Saviour* [m] and *Redeemer*: paid the *Price* of our *Redemption* [n] with *his Blood*: is now our [o] *Mediator*, and *Intercessor*: the [p] *Head* of his *Church*: [q] *King of Kings*: *Lord of Lords*: and the [r] Great *Judge* of the World.

3. With regard to the *Ordinary* Course of GOD's *Providence*, which is Visible and Conspicuous to all, who consider the Disposition and Distribution of all Worldly Happiness and Misery both public and private; it hath pleased GOD besides this Natural and Visible Evidence of his Administration to reveal unto us, that *He* doth govern the World, and superintend

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a Gen. III. 15. *b* XII. 3. XVIII. 18. XXII. 18. *c* 2 Sam. VII. 16. Ps. CXXXII. 11, &c. *d* Is. VII. 14. Jer. XXXI. 22. *e* Gen. XLIX. 10. Hagg. II. 6, &c. Mal. III. 1. *f* Mic. V. 2. John VII. 42. *g* Is. VII. 14. *h* Is. IX. 6, &c. *i* Joh. I. 14, 18. *k* John X. 30. *l* Gal. IV. 4. Hebr. II. 14, 16. *m* Is. XXIX. 22, &c. XLIII. 1, 2. XLIV. 21, &c. LXII. 11, 12. *n* Rom III. 25. Gal. III. 13, &c. Ephes. I. 7. II. 13, &c. Col. I. 14, 20. Heb. IX. 14, &c. X. 5, &c. 1 Pet. I. 18, 19. Rev. I. 5. V. 9. *o* Isa. LIII. 12. Rom. VIII. 27. Hebr. VII. 25. Gal. III. 19, 20. 1 Tim. II. 5. Hebr. VIII. 6. IX. 15. XII. 24. *p* Eph. I. 22. IV. 15. Col. I. 18. II. 19. *q* Rev. XVII. 14. XIX. 16. *r* Gen. XVIII. 25. John V. 27. Acts X. 42. XVII. 31. 2 Cor. V. 10. 2 Tim. IV. 1.

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the Affairs of it: That *He* inſpecteth the Hearts and Actions of Men: that *He* directeth all their Counſels, and diſpoſeth of all Events.

And with regard to *Both* the *Ordinary* and *Extraordinary* Way of his Tranſactions with us: How He looketh upon us, and what are his Sentiments towards us, as we are his *Creatures* and as we are *Sinners*: as we are *Obedient* or *Diſobedient* to his Laws, we find *Him* putting on the *Paſſions* and *Affections* of our Nature, and taking to *Himſelf* the *Organs* of our Senſes, and the *Members* of our Body.

Upon this Plan it may be proper to conſider the *Analogy* of Language in theſe ſeveral Views, that we may mark the ſeveral Degrees, as it approacheth nearer, or retireth further from the Divine Nature, till at laſt it vaniſheth away, and is loſt in a meer *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Scheme.

1. As to his *Nature* and *Attributes* it is revealed, that *GOD is One*, that He ever ſubſiſteth in *Unity* of *Eſſence* and *Diverſity* of *Relation*: theſe are Facts peremptorily aſſerted in the *Scriptures*, as will hereafter appear, and theſe Aſſertions are to be underſtood in a proper *Analogy* of *Language*, which differeth from the Primary and Literal acceptation of the Words, not with regard to the *Reality* of the things themſelves, but only as to our *Conceptions* of them: Thus when it is ſaid, that *Chriſt* is the *Son* of GOD: the *Only Begotten* of the *Father*, with reſpect both to his *Eternal* and *Temporal* Generation: and when Himſelf declareth, *I and my Father are One*, ſignifying both the *Unity* of *Eſſence*,

Essence, and the *Diversity* of *Relation*, the Expressions are to be understood of the *Truth* and *Reality* of these Facts thus delivered in the Language and Conceptions of Men.

Of the Divine *Unity* we can only form a Conception in Exclusion of all *Plurality* or *Multiplication* of Essence under any *Difference* of *Persons*, or *Diversity* of *Relation*: In all *created* Unity, such as rises from *Numbers*, or *Individuals*, we cannot conceive any thing as *One*, but in opposition to, and in supposition of a *Second*, or a *Third*, and we either make the *Unit* the *Beginning*, or the *End* of every *Computation*, altho' truly speaking all imaginable *Numbers* however called by the Name of *one* or *ten*, or *ten thousand*, are no more than an *Aggregation* of so many *Units*, named and distinguished by the *Place*, and *Order*, they severaly possess. But in the *Divine* Essence the *Unity* is *Absolute* without any possible Relation to *Number*, and God is so *First*, as to admit no *Second*, Nothing *before* Him, and Nothing *after* Him, that is, nothing *Second* or *Like* unto Him: and therefore all Distinction must necessarily be comprised in *one* and the same *Indivisible* and *Indiscerptible* Essence, in which nothing of a Different Nature can subsist, and the several *Relations* must consequently be Eternal. For so we conceive of the *Divine Unity* in Opposition to every *Number* from the *Simplicity* of his Nature, and the *Infinity* of his Perfections; and if we cannot conceive the Manner, how a *Distinction* of *Persons* doth subsist in the strictest *Unity* of Essence, we can only conclude, that God subsisteth *not*

as *we* do, and that a *Plurality* of Perſons doth not infer a *Plurality* of Eſſence, and that, however we are forced to borrow our Conceptions of the *Divine* Unity from the beſt Notions we have of *Numerical* and *Created* Unity, we muſt nevertheleſs expreſs this *Unity*, as we do ſome of his *other* Attributes, or at leaſt the *Affections* of his Attributes in a *Negative* ſenſe, and ſay that God is *One* Being in the moſt Abſolute conception, and in the uttermoſt Denyal of *more* Divine Beings, that is of more Gods than *One*: and ſo we ſay, that He is *One* in Denial of all *Plurality*, as we ſay He is *Infinite* and *Immutable* in *denyal* of all *Imperfection*.

The *Unity* the mean while is *Real*, tho' we are not able to expreſs it, but by this borrowed and ſubſtituted Language taken from *Created* Being: and yet Nothing *Created*, neither *Body* nor *Spirit*, is or can be in its Eſſence ſo *much One*, as God is *One*: Not *Body*, For all Bodys ſuppoſe *Number* and *Diviſion*, and however any ſingular *Body* is *One* by *Individuation* ſo as not to be *another*, yet in the Courſe and Poſition of *Numbers* it may be the *fourth* or the *fortieth* as well as the *firſt*, and the *firſt* is no more *One* than the *fiftieth*. But God is no *Individual*, and properly ſpeaking no *Number*, tho' He be *One*: He is no *Individual*, For an *Individual* is *One* diſtinguiſhed from *more* of the ſame *Species*: And He is no *Number*, becauſe He is *Infinite*: He is indeed *Unity* it ſelf; and therefore can be no *Number*; For *Number* of any Denomination is a *Comparative* Term, and the *firſt* ſuppoſes a *ſecond*, or at leaſt a *Poſſibility* of a *ſe-*

a *second*, as evidently as a *second* supposes a *first*.

As *Body* is not, neither is any created *Spirit* so *much One*, as God is *One*: For as to our *Spirits*, besides the Essential Distinction of *Understanding* and *Will*, there are as I have observed, Distinctions in them, which the *Divine* Nature cannot admit of, both in the *Intellectual* and *Moral* Improvements of the *Mind*; and for *Higher* Intelligencys, tho' we have a very imperfect Knowledge of them, yet thus much we may conclude, that as they are created & Finite *Spirits*, there may be Endless Degrees in their Excellencys, and therefore Endless Additions and Improvements to them, and *they* still will be, as we also shall, tho' *ever* approaching *nearer*, yet for *ever* at an *Infinite* Distance from the *Divine* Perfections. God Himself (His Essence and Attributes) is Ever *One*, and therefore we may conclude that altho' we have no Notion of the Divine *Unity* but by these borrowed *Analogical* Conceptions, yet by these we cannot define what the Divine *Unity* is in *it self*, much less can we argue from our Notion of *Human* Unity either of *Body* or *Soul*, or *Spirit separately* or *joyntly* considered, that a *Personal* distinction of *Relations* is *inconsistent* with it.

In the same way of *Analogy* do we conceive the *Relation* of *Father* and *Son*, as the *Son* is said to be the *Begotten* and the *only Begotten* of the *Father*, with Regard both to his *Temporal* and *Eternal* Generation: The Terms *Father*, *Son*, and *Begotten* are as clear when applied by the *Scripture* to the *Divine*, as when they are used

for the Ordinary Courſe of *Human* Generation, and the *Relations* riſing from it are as clear, as thoſe among Men: the *Correſpondence* alſo is as *real*, tho' the *Manner* be *different*: On both ſides there is an equal *Reality*: a true *Father*, a true *Son*, and a true *Relation*; on both ſides a *total* Communication of the *whole* Nature and Eſſence, tho' in *Human* Generation the *Communication* is only *Specifical*, whereas in *Divine* it is truly and entirely *Eſſential*, not parted to *more*, nor *partialy* communicated to *One*, but *entirely* and *fully* communicated, as the *Divine* Nature *muſt be*. With regard to *Creatures* their *Nature* it ſelf is *produced*, and in the *Animal* World the *ſeveral* Natures are equaly and ſucceſſively communicated by Propagation to every *Individual* of the ſame *Species*, and ſo Finite Beings in their ſeveral *Claſſes* poſſeſs the *ſame* Nature *Separately*: But *Infinite* Being in the *Perſonal* Communication of the *Nature* will admit of no *Separation* or *Multiplication* of *Eſſence*: And we may as well expect to be *as* God is in his Nature and Perfections, as to *argue* in a *Strict* and *Literal* Propriety from *Human* Relations to *Divine*, as if the *Father* and *Son* in the *Divine* Nature were as *Diſtinct* and *Separable* as they are in the *Human*: The *Analogical* Language teacheth us ſo far, as we can apprehend the *Fact* or thing *revealed*, to form our Conceptions according to the Terms the *Revelation* is expreſſed in, and to believe in the *Father*, and the *only begotten Son* that the *Relation* is as *Real*, as the *Eſſence* is *Eternal*. We could form no Notion of the *Divine* Relation, but from a *ſubſtituted* Correſpondence of the *Hu-*

Human; and we must rest in the *Reality* and Propriety of the Correspondence, tho' the manner of the Divine Generation is Unconceivable and Incomprehensible, as GOD Himself.

From the *Eternal*, if we pass now to the *Temporal* Generation, we shall here most visibly and undeniably discern the *Truth* of the *Relation*, and at the same time acknowledge the *Analogy* of the *Expression*, and by seeing how it holdeth in the *Temporal* we shall the better conceive the Propriety of *that* Language when applied to the *Eternal* Generation: For both ways our *Blessed* Lord is the *Only begotten Son of GOD*; and the *Analogy* is made more Evident by the *Intervention* of the *Temporal* Generation, whereby He became the *Son* both of GOD and *Man*: The Truth and Reality of his Conception and Birth are Evident, and when *Jesus* was *conceived of the Holy Ghost*, or by the *Power* of the *Highest*, He is as properly the *Son* of *Him* by whose *Power* He was *conceived*, as of *Her* of *whom* he was *born*. That He was not conceived in the *Ordinary* Way, this maketh the *Analogy*, and the *Truth* of the *Conception* sheweth the *Reality* of the *Correspondence*: Because He was *miraculously* conceived by the *Power* of the *Highest*, He is therefore the *Son* of GOD, because He was *made of a Woman*, He is therefore the *Son* of *Man*. The Answer of the Angel that satisfieth *How this shall be*, satisfieth also, *whose* Son He is: [a] *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, there-*

[a] Luke I. 35.

fore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of GOD. Accordingly with respect to the *Temporal* Generation and the *Relation* arising from *it*, St *John* declareth, [a] *The WORD was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the Only Begotten Son of GOD;* and with respect to the *Eternal* Generation, and consequently to the *Relation* rising from it, and the Union of the Natures which followed after, concerning this WORD, *who* was made *Flesh*, *he* had declared before, [b] *In the Beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with GOD, and the WORD was GOD.*

In this manner are deduced the several Points *revealed* concerning the *Divine Essence*, *Unity* and *Relation*, particularly the *Relation* between the *Father* and the *Son*, founded both in the *Eternal* and *Temporal* Generation: by the *First* of which our *Blessed* Lord is the Eternal *Son*, ever *One* in the strictest and most inviolable *Unity* with the *Father*, and ever *distinguished* by a *Personal Relation* from *Him*: by the *Second* also He is the *Son* of GOD in *both* Natures *United*, *Equal to the Father* as to his *Divine*, and *Inferior to the Father* as to his *Human* Nature: The same with respect to *Unity* and *Equality* is to be said of the *Holy Ghost* likewise, and all our Conceptions of Him, as *sent by*, and *Proceeding from* the *Father* and the *Son*, are to be formed according to the *Analogy* of that *Language*, in *which* they are expressed.

To close this great Article. Of the Great and Incomprehensible GOD, considered either *Absolutely* in *Himself*, or *Relatively* in the *Personal*

sonal Distinctions of his Eternal and Indivisible *Essence*, we can conceive of *Him* only by *Analogy*. The Doctrinal Points and Revelation concerning *Him* are to be received according to the obvious sense and Propriety of the Words, in which they are proposed by the *Scriptures*, and that is, Not in a *Figurative*, for then *Nothing* is meant at all: and not in a *Literal*, for we cannot *conceive* of GOD, as of *ourselves*, and therefore in an *Analogical* and *Substituted* sense, because in *that alone* GOD is pleased to speak and accommodate *Himself* to *us*, and by that alone can *we* accommodate our speech and sentiments to *Him*: The Language is as proper, when so applied to express the Correspondent *Relation* and *Personality* in the *Divine* Nature, as it is in its *Primary* Use and Application to signify the same *Relation* among *Men*, and when these Conceptions are *substituted* and *transferred* to the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, we understand as *real* a *Generation* and *Relation*, that is, as *real* a *Father*, as *real* a *Son*, and as *real* a *Spirit*, as when the *same* Terms are used of the *Father* and *Son* and *Spirit* of a *Man*; but because there is an Unconceivable and Inexpressible Distance and Difference between the *Creator* and the *Creature*, we do not, as all *Heretics* absurdly do, argue in a *strict* manner from *Human* Relations to *Divine*: The *Relation* we say is *real*: the *Manner unconceivable*, and we have no way of *thinking*, or *expressing* our Thoughts, or *understanding* any thing at all concerning these *Mysterious* Points, but by that *Analogy* of Expression, which is founded on a

real

real Correſpondence between *Human* Relations and *Divine*, under thoſe *ſubſtituted* Conceptions of *Father* and *Son*, which are uſed by God *Himſelf* to convey *this* Doctrine to us. And as in the *Generation* of the *Man Chriſt Jeſus* we muſt allow a *true* Generation, tho' the Manner be *Tranſcendent* and *Miraculous*, in the *Eternal* we muſt allow a *true* Generation alſo, and becauſe both the *Eternal* and *Temporal* are real, tho' not after the ſtrict and Literal Meaning of *Human* Generation, therefore we underſtand them according to that real Correſpondence which our *Analogical* Conceptions and Language do bear unto them.

2. If we conſider the Divine *Eſſence* as expreſſed in the *Attributes*, both *Natural* and *Moral*, *Communicable* and *Incommunicable*, we can only conceive them by *Analogy*. *Eternity*, which I have already mentioned, we conceive by *Time* and *Duration*, which repreſented without Beginning or End, carry the neareſt *Analogy* to *it*: *Omnipotence* by the beſt Notions we can form of *Natural Power*, accommodated and applied to the Viſible *Effects* of *Divine*: *Omniſcience* by Univerſal Knowledge: *Omnipreſence* by *Ubiquity* filling all imaginable *Space*, and reaching infinitely *beyond*. If there be any thing *real* in *Time*, in *Power*, in *Knowledge*, and *Bodily Preſence*, and in the *Circumſcribed Subſiſtence* of *unbodied Spirits* in their *place*, there is ſomething more real in *Eternity*, *Omnipotence*, *Omniſcience* and *Omnipreſence*, and the ſmall Proportion on the *ſide* of *Created* Beings evidenceth the greater Reality on the *ſide* of the *Creator*; and yet, *weak* as our *Power*,

Power, *ſmall* as our *Knowledge*, *confined* as our *Preſence*, and *ſhort* as our *Time* is, we muſt have this *ſimilar* Conception of *Omnipotence*, *Omniſcience*, *Omnipreſence* and *Eternity*, or we can have *none* at all.

If we conſider the *Moral*, which are uſualy called the *Communicable* Attributes, the *Analogy* between the *moral* Perfections *Human* and *Divine* is generaly allowed; and commonly thought to be *more* evident, and the Reſemblance to be *like* at leaſt in *kind*, how *faint* ſoever it is in *degree*: and it muſt be owned that our *Abſtracted* Notions of *Holineſs* and *Juſtice*, *Fortitude*, *Goodneſs* and *Truth*, ſo far, as they are drawn from the Exemplification of them in God Himſelf, that is ſo far, as *He* hath revealed them in his Communications with Mankind, are a fair *Tranſcript* and a true *Copy* of the Divine *Original*; but if we endeavour to form our Notions of *Moral* Perfections from the *Practice* of Men, or the moſt perfect *Schemes* of Human *Morality* alone, that were ever produced by the *Heathen* World, we ſhall find that tho' the *Abſtract* or *Doctrinal* Notions are true ſo far, as they correſpond to the *ſame* Notions in the *Scripture*, and tho' they were exemplified alſo *uniformly* in *all* their Actions, yet both their *Doctrine* and *Practice* approach no nearer to the *Divine* Perfections, than this *ſhort* Life doth to *Eternity*, or our *Knowledge* to *Omniſcience*: and therefore our Notions of the *Moral* Attributes of God muſt be underſtood and expreſſed in the ſame *Analogy* of Conceptions and Language with the *Natural*.

But

But the Truth is, unleſs we put a Difference between our *Notions* and our *Practice*, we ſhall hardly diſcover any *Analogy* at all between the *Moral* Perfections of God and Man. For want of this Diſtinction the *Heathen* Poets eſpecialy, how ſublime Notions ſoever they gave the World of the Majeſty and Perfection of their *Gods*, did nevertheleſs debaſe their Actions, and make them correſpond with the *Vices* rather than the Frailtys and Infirmitys of *Men*: We ſee here the *Defect* of the Heathen *Schemes*, and what poor aſſiſtance they had from *their* Reaſon alone, weak and corrupted as it was, whereby to form any ſuitable and worthy Thoughts of the Divine Perfections: But as *we* take in the Aſſiſtance of *Revelation*, and find all the Notions of *Morality* therein taught agreeable to the ſtricteſt and trueſt *Principles* of *Reaſon*; as we draw our Notions of *Juſt*, and *Good*, and *True*, from the Tranſactions of God with Men, and found them on the *Divine Practice*, as well as on the *Principles* of *Reaſon*, we are ſure, that propoſing the Divine Example for our Pattern, there is ſo far a juſt Correſpondence between our Actions of the *ſame* Denomination, and thoſe of our great Lord and Maſter, and conſequently a juſt Agreement and Proportion in our Notions of *Moral* Virtue both *Human* and *Divine*; But ſtill the beſt and higheſt Notions, we can frame of them, as they are in God, and are exerciſed by *Him*, are only *Analogical*, that is, *True*, but *Inadequate*: not *commenſurate*, but only *holding* in ſome *ſimilar* Proportion, and the *Goodneſs* of

of Men both in *Notion* and *Extent* muſt fall infinitely ſhort of the *Goodneſs* of GOD.

But there are ſeveral *Virtues* in our *Schemes* of Morality which ſeem *peculiar* to *Man*, and ſeveral *Dutys* which regard his *ſinful* and *fallen* Eſtate; and all theſe, tho' they be equaly founded in the *Reaſon* of things, according to the *Nature* and *Condition*, *Relation* and *Circumſtances* of Mankind, are not *directly* founded in any *immediate* and *proper* Correſpondence with the *Moral* Perfections of GOD: but are *reductively* to be underſtood, either, as they are *perfective* of our Nature, or their Contrarys *repugnant* to the Divine Purity, Holineſs, and Perfection, and ſo to the *Eternal Reaſon* of Things, *which* ever *conſtitutes* the *Eſſential* Difference between *Good* and *Evil*.

As we are *Men*, and as we are *Sinners*, what think we of *Humility*, *Temperance* and *Chaſtity*? *Humility* we ſhould think belongeth not to the *Divine* Being, for *He* can never *think more highly of Himſelf*, *than He ought to think*, and *Pride* can never approach *Him*; and yet from *Him* we may learn the ſublimeſt Notions of *Humility*. [a] *For who is like unto the Lord our GOD, who hath his dwelling ſo high, and yet humbleth Himſelf to behold the Things that are in Heaven and Earth*? And when will [b] *this Mind be in us, which was in Chriſt Jeſus, who being in the Form of GOD, yet took upon Him the Form of a Servant, and became Obedient to Death even the Death of the Croſs*? With reſpect to *this Grace* and *Virtue*, tho' we

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a Pſal. CXIII. 5, 6. *b* Phil. II. 5, &c.

find

find an *Analogy* in the *Divine* Practice, and with reſpect to the *other Virtues* I mentioned, tho' ſome *Analogy* in the *Divine Holineſs* and *Purity*, yet we cannot imagine *them* to be in GOD, *as* they are in *us*, nor in *Unbodied* Spirits as they are in *us* who have *Bodys to keep under*, and *ſenſual Appetites* to *ſubdue*: In GOD they are conſidered as *Perfections* in oppoſition to the contrary *Defects*: is us as *Dutys* to *lead* us, and *Humility* eſpecialy, as a *Duty* to *Exalt* us, to *Perfection*. I will not reaſon here upon the *Obligation* riſing from the *Reaſon* and *Fitneſs* of things: With reſpect to *us*, it is undoubted, excluſive of any *other* Command than *that*, which GOD hath given us in our very *Frame* and *Conſtitution*; But I will only obſerve, that we cannot with any Propriety pretend that GOD is *obliged* to be *Humble*, *Temperate* and *Chaſte*; And to ſay that GOD is *obliged* to be *Pure* and *Holy*, *Juſt* and *Good*, is exactly *as* proper *as* to ſay, *He* is *obliged* to *exiſt*, or to *Be what He is*. His *Attributes* and *Eſſence* are truly the *ſame*: And the *Name* He gave Himſelf, I AM WHAT I AM, is fully expreſſive of *Both*.

From the very *manner* of our Knowledge we may diſcover how *little* it is we know of the Divine Eſſence even in his *Moral* Perfections, as they are in themſelves, by our *Natural* Light alone: The neareſt *Analogys* we bear unto *them*, are vaſtly diſtant and unequal, and there are ſome *Dutys* incumbent upon us, that cannot by any direct and immediate Concluſion be conſidered as *Perfections* in the Divine Nature.

But whatever we know of God either by *Reason* or *Revelation* all our Knowledge is conveyed by *Analogy*, and taketh its immediate Rise from that Resemblance, which is found in the Correspondence and Proportion of things compared together. Our Knowledge of God consisteth in the Correspondence, we find between the Divine *Existence*, *Attributes* and *Operations*, and those *Notions*, we are able to form of *Existence* from *our selves*, who *feel* that we *are*, and from other *Beings*, whom we *see* to *exist*, together with the *Endowments*, *Facultys* and *Actions* of all *Intelligent Agents*, both *Angels* and *Men*; and the Mind, if it taketh in *Angels*, seemeth to proceed in this manner. From the Notions and the Consciousness, we have of our own *Existence* as *Intelligent* and *Moral* Beings, we conclude to the Singular *Existence* of *Angels* as *Intelligent* and *Moral* Beings, and when we have ascribed *Natural*, *Intellectual* and *Moral* Endowments to them in a far more Excellent Degree, than we find them in ourselves, we judge, that there is a true Correspondence between our *Spirits* and *Them*, as they are *Created* Spirits as well as *We*, tho' their *manner* of *Acting*, and *Knowing*, as they are *Pure Unbodied* Spirits, must be *different* from *Ours*: and then because we conceive of God, as a Being infinitely *Perfect* in *Knowledge*, *Goodness* and *Power*, we conceive the *Knowledge*, *Goodness* and *Power* of *Angels* carried on to *Infinite* Perfection in God: tho' still we must remember, that, however the *Analogy* holdeth in any Higher *Degrees* between God and *Angels*, these Attributes are in *another* Man-

Manner in the *Creator*, than in the moſt glorious of his *Creatures*: If without this *Gradation* we do immediately *ſubſtitute* our own Conceptions of *Knowledge*, *Goodneſs* and *Power*, *ſuch* as we can form from *our ſelves alone*, the Correſpondence is ſtill, as *real* according to our Proportion, and lower ſtation in the Intelligent and Moral Scale, as it is between Angels and their great Creator.

So far then as we reſemble GOD *being made after his Likeneſs* in the Intellectual Powers, and Energy of the Mind, and are *created* alſo *after his Image in Righteouſneſs, and true Holineſs*, there is a true and proper *Analogy* of *Language*, both in *Name* and *Thing*, between the *Intellectual* Facultys of *Man*, and the *Correſpondent* Perfections in the *Divine* Nature, as alſo between the *Moral* Perfections belonging to *Man*, and the *Correſpondent* Attributes of GOD: and however *weak* and *imperfect* our *Knowledge*, *Goodneſs* and *Powers* are, we argue with all *Veneration* to the *greater* and moſt *tranſcendent Reality*, and *Perfection* of them in the *Divine Being*; and we ſhould even ſtrive to *realize them* more and more in our ſelves, ſince we are taught, that the very Perfection of our Nature conſiſteth in imitating the Excellency of the Divine Original, and improving into a *nearer*, and more *Seraphic* Reſemblance of it for ever.

Before I leave this Subject of the *Divine Eſſence*, *Relations* and *Attributes*, I would offer ſomething more by way of *recapitulation*, and *Remark* on what I have delivered, and *apply* it to the *Argument* we are *upon*.

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It hath been the conſtant Method of all the *Adverſarys* of the *Chriſtian* Faith to oppoſe the ſeveral great *Articles* of it, either by a meer *Figurative* Interpretation on the *one* Hand, or a ſtrict *Literal* Conſtruction on the *other* ſo, as to argue in a *ſtrict Literal* ſenſe from *Human* Subjects to *Divine*. The Queſtion is, *How* the ſeveral Aſſertions concerning the *Divine Nature*, *Relations* and *Attributes* are to be underſtood? The *Nature* and *Attributes* are indeed the *ſame*, and there is no *Diverſity*, but of *Relation* alone in the *Divine Eſſence*: only for our more diſtinct Apprehenſion, and orderly proceeding, we generaly conſider the *Nature* and *Attributes* in a ſeveral Diſtribution, and the *Attributes* we commonly divide into *Communicable* and *Incommunicable*: and becauſe we can underſtand nothing of the *Divine Eſſence*, but by the *Attributes*, as we know nothing of created *Eſſences*, but by their *Propertys*, we are to conſider in *what* way we are to underſtand the *Attributes*, becauſe in the *ſame* way we muſt underſtand whatever elſe is revealed concerning the *Divine Eſſence* and *Operations*.

Of the *Incommunicable* Attributes it is agreed, that we have no *proper*, *direct* and *adequate* Conceptions, and yet we muſt acknowledge, that the Conceptions, we have, do repreſent unto us in ſome Correſpondent manner, the *Truth* and *Reality* of the Things conceived: Of the *Communicable* ſome have contended, that we have more *proper*, *direct* and *adequate* Conceptions, and that *Goodneſs*, and *Truth*, and *Juſtice* in God are the *ſame*, that they are in *us*: They

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are *anſwerable* indeed to the *ſame* moral Characters in *Men* ſo far, as to give us juſt Apprehenſions of them, and teach us to practiſe them towards each other, as we find them exemplified in the *Divine* Exerciſe of them towards us. But when we come to conſider it more attentively, we ſhall find, that our Conceptions of Them are as *inadequate*, as our Conceptions of his *Incommunicable* Attributes: we have no more *adequate* a Notion of his *Juſtice*, than of his *Power*; nor of his *Goodneſs*, than of his *Knowledge*; nor of his *Truth*, than we have of his *Preſence*: It will therefore be abſurd to ſuppoſe that theſe *Attributes* are in God, as they are in *Men*, and that *they* are exerciſed by *Him*, as *they* are by *us*: In God *they* are all *Eſſential*: in *Men* they are *Habitual* or acquired: in God *they* are Infinite in their *Perfection*, *Duration* and *Extent*: in *Men imperfect*; *Momentary*, and *confined* as to our *Obligation* and the *Practice* of them in this *Life*; and but few of our *Moral* Dutys will paſs the *Verge* of this World: The preſent *Relations* and *Circumſtances*, we ſtand in, do ſink with our Lives, and we ſhall leave the whole *Decalogue*, as it is in its *preſent* Form, behind us: Nothing will paſs with us into Heaven but *Holineſs* and *Purity*, but *Love* and *Charity*: even *Faith* and *Hope*, thoſe *Evangelical Graces*, ſhall determine there, and therefore the [a] *greateſt of theſe is Charity*. So *ſhort* and *inadequate* are our Notions, ſo *different* is the *Exerciſe* of *theſe* Perfections in *Heaven* and on *Earth*! far more

[a] 1 Cor. XIII.

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different between GOD and *us*! and tho' the *Scriptures* give us clearer and fuller Conceptions, than we could form from our own *Abſtracted* Reaſonings alone, yet even thoſe glorious Manifeſtations of *them* therein recorded, are only a ſmall *ſpecimen* compared with the brighter Manifeſtations to numberleſs Worlds, and *Myriads* of higher Intelligencys in *manifold* Degrees one ſuperior to another, and the *loweſt* of them vaſtly ſuperior to the *largeſt* Spirit that ever informed an Human Body!

Since then it is not pretended, that we have *proper* and *adequate* Conceptions of the *Incommunicable* Attributes of *Eternity*, *Omnipotence*, *Omniſcience*, *Omnipreſence*, we cannot underſtand them *literaly* according to the Notions of *Time* and *Power*, and *Knowledge* and *Bodily Preſence*, nor yet can we underſtand them in a *Figurative* ſenſe alone, as if they were only ſo many *Schemes* and *Forms* of Speech, it remaineth therefore, that we underſtand them in an *intermediate* ſenſe according to that *Correſpondence* and *Proportion*, which *Human* Conceptions can any ways bear to *Divine* Perfection: In the *ſame* way alſo the *Communicable* and *Moral* Attributes are to be underſtood, as they are all *Infinite*, *Eternal*, and *Unconceivable* in any *other*, and then from the confeſſed Correſpondence between our *Abſtract* and moſt Sublime Notions of *Goodneſs* we form our Conceptions of the *Goodneſs* of GOD in ſome *ſimilar* Proportion and Correſpondence; and how *inadequate* ſoever our Conceptions are, the Correſpondence is *real*, or we can have *no* Notions of *real* Good-

ness either in GOD, or *our selves*. When we speak of GOD, or when GOD speaketh of *Himself*, He speaketh according to this *Analogy*, and He ever communicates *Himself* in such *Conceptions*, and such *Language*, as we are able to understand: As in *Human* subjects there must be some thing real to which any *Figurative Mode* of Speech can be *applied*, in *Divine* subjects also, something *real* must be conceived, before any *Figurative* Forms of Speech can be used about *them*. Thus we are supposed to have previous Conceptions of the *Power* and *Providence*, and *Wisdom*, and *Goodness* of GOD, before we can understand what is *Figuratively* spoken concerning the *Exercise* and *Manifestation* of these *Attributes*; For *Figures* do not *furnish* us with Knowledge, but *suppose it*: *Figures* themselves without their *Subject* convey no *Idea* or *Conception* to the Mind, and a *Metaphor* is no further *significative*, that it is *fitly* applied.

I pass now from his *Nature* and *Attributes*,

2. To the *Revelation* GOD hath made of *Himself* with reference to the *Extraordinary* Way of our *Redemption*.

Upon this Head I might be the shorter, having already spoken of the *Person* of our *Redeemer*, and the *Relation*, He standeth in *both* as to his *Eternal* and *Temporal* Generation; but the Doctrine of our *Redemption* in this view of *Analogy* will require a peculiar Consideration.

According to the *Texts* before Referred to with regard to the *Person* of our *Redeemer*, it is revealed in the seventh Chapter of *Isaiah* That *He* is *Immanuel GOD with us*, and as if the Prophecy

phecy were even then compleated, the *Prophet* in his ninth Chapter ſpeaking of this Future Event proclaimeth, *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given*; This Manner of ſpeaking ſo frequent in the Prophecys, thoſe relating to the *Meſſiah* eſpecialy, is highly proper in the Spirit of GOD, to [a] *whoſe Eyes all things are open*, to whom all things are preſent, [b] *who calleth thoſe things, that be not, as though they were.* The Circumſtances alſo of his *Birth*, his *Life* and his *Death*, and all that He ſhould *do* and *ſuffer* for for us, his *Satisfaction*, *Mediation*, and *Interceſſion* are ſeveraly foretold in the *Old* Teſtament, and related and aſſerted as *Facts* in the *New*.

What therefore I would obſerve concerning the *Prophecys* is *this*, that howſoever *ſome* of them are delivered in *Figurative* and *Emblematical* Forms, they were all *literaly* fulfilled, and our *Bleſſed Lord* is not only in a *real* and *Analogical* ſenſe the *Son* of the *Father* by an *Eternal* Generation before the Worlds, and not only in the *ſame Analogical* ſenſe the *Son* of the *Father* by *Temporal* Generation born in the World, but *He* is *Literaly* alſo the *Son of Man* on the part of the *Virgin*, who bare *Him*, and his *Birth* and *all* that followeth upon it are ſo many Hiſtorical *Facts* to be underſtood as *Literaly* as any other Hiſtory is, notwithſtanding that ſome part of the Relation of what *He* hath *done* and continueth to *do* for our *Salvation*, is to be taken according to our *Analogical* Conceptions correſpondent to the *Terms*, in which they are

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a Hebr. IV. 3. b Rom. IV. 17.

expreſſed: That He was born, that He lived in the ordinary way of other Men, that *He went about doing Good*, and did many Wonderful Works: That *He ſuffered*, *died*, was *buryed*, and *roſe again the third day*, are *Facts* to be *Literaly* underſtood *without* any *Analogical* Conception: That He is our *Redeemer*, our *Mediator*, and *Interceſſor*, are alſo *Facts* as ſurely to be *believed*, but by reaſon of the Correſpondence between *Temporal* and *Spiritual Redemption Mediation* and *Interceſſion* to be *Analogicaly* underſtood: the *Analogy* affecteth not the *Reality* of the *Facts*, it regardeth only the *Manner* of our *Conceptions*, and the *Expreſſions* anſwerable to *ſuch* Conceptions. From hence we may infer according to the Obſervation, I have offered, that what is *Figuratively* expreſſed in the *Prophecy* is *Literaly* or at leaſt *Analogicaly* to be underſtood in the *Fact* and Completion: *Literaly*, where the *Fact* anſwereth both in *Matter* and *Manner* to the *ſame* among Men; *Analogicaly*, where the *Fact* is of the *ſame* Denomination, but not after the *ſame* Manner, and is yet called by the *ſame* Name, and expreſſed in the *ſame* Terms by reaſon of the *Correſpondence* that is *between them*; as when God ſetteth forth things Spiritual, Supernatural and Divine in the Common Language and Conceptions of Men ſubſtituted to convey, and expreſs them to us.

With regard then to the *Prophecys*, thoſe things which are *Figuratively* foretold, are to be underſtood *Literaly* in the Application, and *Literaly* or *Analogicaly* in our Conceptions as they are of a *Temporal* or *Spiritual* Nature. Thoſe

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that are *plain* (as many of them are) will direct us to the Meaning of thoſe, that are *Figurative*, and both the *Promiſes* and *Prophecys* pointing out the *Perſon* of our *Redeemer*, are many of them ſo far *Literal* as to determine the ſenſe of thoſe, that are only *Typical*, and whatever *Doubts* may ariſe from thoſe Schemes of Speech, in which the *Prophecys* and *Promiſes* are given, theſe are all cleared up by the Application and Accompliſhment of them: For however they may be expreſſed, the Completion of them is exactly *Literal* in Oppoſition to all *Alluſive* and *Allegorical* Interpretations. For tho' St *Paul* ſpeaking of the two Sons of *Abraham*: [a] *One by a bond Maid, the other by a free Woman*, calleth *theſe things* an *Allegory*, yet *ſuch* are *not* the *Prophecys* relating to our LORD: *Allegorys* are built on *real* or *invented Facts*, and applied like other *Apologues* for Inſtruction; but *Prophecys* point to *future* Events, and end in *Facts* hereafter to be done: There is no part of Hiſtory, but like the Hiſtory of our *Saviour* and his *Miracles*, it may be turned into *Allegory*: yet the *Allegory deſtroyeth* not but *ſuppoſeth* the *Fact* already paſt; as *Prophecy* however *figuratively* expreſſed, is not meerly a *Viſionary* repreſentation, but an *Indication* and *Deſcription* of *what* ſhall come to paſs *Hereafter*: and there is no Pretence to argue for a *Figurative* ſenſe of thoſe Prophecys, which have been *Literaly* fulfilled.

Thus with reſpect to the *Literal* or *Analogical* ſenſe according to the *Nature* and *Subject* of the *Prophecy*, when we read, that a [b] *Virgin ſhall con-*

a Gal. IV. 22, 24. *b* Iſa. VII, IX.

ceive and bear a Son, and that unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and when for the Completion, we hear the *Angel* proclaiming the *Birth* of *this* Child to the *Shepherds*, [a] *Unto you is born this Day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Chriſt the Lord*, we are at no loſs to underſtand, *who* is meant by the *Scepter* and the *Star*: the *Root* and the *Branch*, and the *Horn* of *Salvation*, eſpecialy when we hear *Zecharias* declare, that [b] *GOD hath raiſed up for us an Horn of Salvation in the Houſe of his ſervant David*: and our Bleſſed Lord Himſelf aſſerting, [c] *I am the Root and Offspring of David, and the bright and Morning Star.* If there was any Difficulty to underſtand *Who* is meant by the *Seed of the Woman*, the *Seed of Abraham*, and the *Seed* of *David*, this is *fixed* and *aſcertained*, when we read, that [d] *when the Fulneſs of Time was come GOD ſent forth his Son made of a Woman*, that is made Man, and deriving his Human Nature from the Woman, of whom He was made; [e] *Foraſmuch then as the Children are partakers of Fleſh and Blood, He alſo took part of the ſame*: [f] *For verily He took not on Him the Nature of Angels, but He took on Him the Seed of Abraham*, and ſo *genuin* is the *Deſcent*, that thro' *Chriſt* the *Adoption*, and the *other* Priveleges of it are derived to us, [g] *And if we be Chriſt's, then are we Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promiſe*: *His* Deſcent from *Abraham* is further manifeſted by His Deſcent from *David*, and as it was both *promiſed*,

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a Luke II. 11. *b* Luke I. 69. *c* Rev. XXII. 16. *d* Gal. IV. 4. *e* Hebr. II. 14. *f* v. 16. *g* Gal. III. 29.

and

and *propheſied*, that *Chriſt* ſhould be *the Son of David*, the *Jews* underſtood both the *Promiſes* and the *Prophecys* in a proper *Literal* true *Perſonal* ſenſe, and accordingly, when our Bleſſed *Lord* asked, [a] *What think ye of Chriſt? Whoſe Son is He? They ſay unto Him, The Son of David*; and tho' *He* alloweth the *Anſwer* to be true, yet He propoſeth a *Difficulty* for them to ſolve; *If He be David's Son, how then doth David in Spirit call Him Lord? if David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son?* [b] *How ſay the Scribes, that the Chriſt is the Son of David?* [c] *How ſay they that the Chriſt is David's Son.* The Anſwer to theſe Queſtions will neceſſarily ſhew the *Divine* Eſſence and *Eternal* Generation, and alſo the *Temporal* Generation and *Human* Nature of the *Son*. It is with regard to the *Firſt*, that *David calleth Him Lord*: It is with reference to the *Second*, that *He is his Son*. This was the *Doctrine* of the *Jewiſh* Church long before, and continued to be ſo at the *time* of our *Saviour's Coming*, both among the *Common* People and the *Scribes*. For *ſo* ſaid [d] the *Scribes*, and thus the *two blind men* cry out [e] *Thou Son of David have mercy on us*. And upon his healing the *poſſeſſed* of the *Devil* both *blind* and *dumb*, the *People were amazed and ſaid*, [f] *Is not this the Son of David*: In St *John* we read, that there was a Contention among the People whether He were the *Chriſt*? [g] *For many of the People ſaid, Of a Truth this is the Prophet*: *Others ſaid, This is the Chriſt*: But ſome ſaid, *Shall*

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a Matth. XXII. 42, 45. *b* Mark XII. 35. *c* Luke XX. 41.
d See above. *e* Mat. IX. 27. *f* XII. 23. *g* John VII. 40, &c.

Chriſt

Chriſt come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture ſaid, that Chriſt cometh of the Seed of David, and out of the Town of Bethlehem, where David was? And thus alſo the Multitudes cryed, [a] *Hoſanna to the Son of David.* As the *Jews* expected Him, ſo the *Apoſtles* declared Him to be *of the Seed of David.* Thus St *Peter* in his firſt Sermon to the *Jews*, applying the Words of the ſixteenth *Pſalm* to the *Reſurrection* of our *Lord*, ſhoweth that *David* ſo intended them, and upon what ground he ſpoke them. [b] *Therefore being a Prophet, and knowing that GOD had ſworn with an Oath unto him, that of the Fruit of his Loins according to the Fleſh, He would raiſe up Chriſt to ſit on his Throne, he ſeeing this before ſpake of the Reſurrection of Chriſt*: Afterwards St *Paul*, preaching to the *Jews* of *Antioch* in *Piſidia*, deduceth their Hiſtory in few Words, from their Coming out of *Egypt* unto *David*, and declareth unto them, [c] *Of this Man's Seed hath GOD according to his Promiſe raiſed unto Iſrael a Saviour Jeſus*; and the *Promiſe* he refers to is particularly *this*, [d] *I will give you the ſure Mercys of David.* Again in the firſt Chapter of his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, ſpeaking of the *Goſpel*, which GOD had before declared unto the World by his Prophets in the Holy Scriptures, telleth them, this *Goſpel* of GOD was [e] *concerning his Son, Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, which was made of the Seed of David according to the Fleſh, and declared to be the Son of GOD with Power according to the Spirit of Holineſs by the Re-*

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a Mat. XXI. 9. *b* Acts II. 30. *c* Acts XIII. 23. *d* v. 34. *e* Rom. I. 1, 2, 3.

ſurrection

ſurrection from the Dead. And in his ſecond Epiſtle he chargeth *Timothy* to [a] *remember that Jeſus Chriſt of the Seed of David was raiſed from the Dead.* Upon all which paſſages I would obſerve, that the *Apoſtles* St *Peter*, and St *Paul*, do conſtantly connect this Declaration with the *Reſurrection* of *Chriſt*, as if the *Reſurrection* were not only a Proof, that He was of the *Seed* of *David*, but as if his being of the *Seed* of *David* were alſo an Aſſurance and Proof of his *Reſurrection* according to the Promiſe of GOD juſt now mentioned, *I will give you the ſure Mercies of David.*

Where therefore the *Promiſes* are *Typical* and the *Prophecys* are *Figurative*, they both refer to a *real* Perſon, and to *real* Facts, as there muſt in all Caſes be a *Subject* ſuppoſed, to which any *Types* or *Figures* can be applied. For every *Type* is a *Type* of *ſomething*, and every *Figure* is of the Nature of a *Prædicate* in a *Propoſition*, or of a *Verb*, or *Adjective* in a *Sentence*, or if ſometimes the *Nouns* themſelves be *Figurative*, then they are *Metonymys* of one Diviſion or other; as the *Scepter* and *Star* ſtand for the *Kingdom*, the *Power* and the *Glory*, and theſe again for the *King* Himſelf: So that altho' in a *Literal* ſenſe our Bleſſed Lord is neither a *Scepter* nor a *Star*, yet the *Scepter* is an *Enſign* of his *Royalty*, and the *Star* of his *Glory*; the *Sign* is only uſed for the thing *ſignified* thereby, and theſe *Types* and *Figures* are as properly applied to *thoſe* Things, and Perſons, which are *Analogicaly* conceived, as to *thoſe*, which are *Literaly underſtood.*

[a] 2 Tim. II. 8.

If

If from the *Prophecys* we pass on to the *Titles* and *Offices* of our Lord, as they are *Historicaly* related, and *Doctrinaly* delivered in the *New Testament*, we shall find, that as the *Character* riseth from the *Office*, or the *Offices* follow upon the *Character*, both his *Actions* and his *Titles* are *Real* and *True*, if not in a *Literal*, at least in an *Analogical* sense in Opposition to all *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Interpretations: In a *Literal* sense He may be called a *King*: in an *Analogical* sense the *Head of the* [a] *Church, which is his Body*, for there is the same Agreement between a *Mystical*, as there is between a *Political* and a *Natural* Body.

But without insisting on *all*, I shall consider Him under those *Ministerial* Titles especialy, which are given Him, as He is our *Saviour*, and do more immediately flow from the *Offices*, He discharged, and hath discharged under *that* Denomination. These are the several *Titles* of *Redeemer*, *Mediator*, and *Intercessor*, in the several *Acts* of *Redemption*, *Mediation*, and *Intercession*, as they are represented to have been wrought, and to be still performed by Him.

And first we may consider our Lord under the Title and Character of our *Redeemer promised* from the *Foundation of the World*: *typified* and *foretold* in all Ages thro' the *Patriarchal* and *Mosaical* Dispensations, and in the *Fulness of Time Coming* into the World, and *Finishing* the great Work, He had undertaken.

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[a] Ephes. I 22, 23.

It

It is not my Purpose to enter into the Argument it self with those who deny this gracious Doctrine, but only to shew in *what sense* it is to be understood: *viz.* not *Figuratively*, or *Allegoricaly*, but *Literaly*, and *Analogicaly* in several respects, So that our *Redemption*, which is an *Analogical* Conception, is as *real*, as that *Misery*, which is *Literaly* everlasting: And our *Reconciliation*, as our *Sins*, which are *Literaly* most grievous Offences: We are not delivered from a *Figurative* Death, neither are we cleansed from *imaginary* Transgressions, and if any *Figurative* Expressions are used they are not intended to attenuate and rarifie these important and weighty Truths into Air, but to express and describe more strongly the greatness and Aggravation of our *Guilt* and *Misery*, and the *Goodness* and *Severity* of God.

For the Doctrine it self the whole is a *Matter* of *Revelation* and *Fact*, and cannot be argued by *Reason* any further than *Reason* concurreth with the plain *Facts* and Doctrines of *Revelation*: We commonly express this Doctrine of *Redemption* by that of *Satisfaction*; It is true, the *Word* it self is not a *Scripture Term*, but the sense and meaning of it is fully contained in the *Scriptures*, and the *Enemys* of our *Faith* do not *deny* the Doctrine of *Christ*'s *Satisfaction*, *because* it is not a *Scriptural* Term; but *because* they *deny* that *Christ* did bear our Iniquitys, that He suffered for us, and offered Himself a Sacrifice for our Sins; they *deny*, tho' Himself saith it, that [a] *He came to give his Life a Ransom for Many*,

a Matt. XX. 28.

and

and tho' St *Paul* teſtifieth, [a] *that he gave Himſelf a Ranſom for all*, and that He *paid* the *Price* and *redeemed* us with his *Blood*, and *reconciled* us unto GOD.* All theſe are *Scripture* Doctrines, ex-

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[a] 1 Tim. II. 6. * Without entring into a Length of Argument, it is enough to produce thoſe Scriptures, which deliver this Doctrine in the ſtrongeſt Terms: and there needeth no other Confutation of their forced and languid Expoſitions: That our Bleſſed Lord was ordained to this Work, and undertook it with his own free Conſent we are firſt informed by Gen. III. 15. our Lord Himſelf being then appointed Judge, and acting alſo as Mediator between GOD and Man, and all the Promiſes of a Saviour and of Redemption by Him are to the ſame Effect, and need not be recited at large. The Ordainment of Him to this Office we may find in Iſaiah XLII. 1 to the ſeventh verſe: 1 Cor. II. 7. more clearly Hebr. V. 4, 5, 6. [And no Man taketh this Honour unto himſelf, but he that is called of GOD, as was Aaron: So alſo, Chriſt glorified not Himſelf to be made an High-prieſt; but He, that ſaid unto Him, Thou art my Son —— Thou art a Prieſt for ever after the Order of Melchiſedec. ver. 10. Called of GOD an High-prieſt after the Order of Melchiſedec:] His own Willingneſs is expreſſed in theſe pathetic Words Luke XII. 50. [I have a Baptiſm to be baptized with, and how am I ſtraitned, till it be accompliſhed!] John VI. 51. [and the Bread that I will give is my Fleſh, which I will give for the Life of the World.] X. 17, 18. [Therefore doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my Life, that I might take it again. No Man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of my ſelf: I have power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again.] And *Both*: the *Ordainment* of GOD, and his own *Willingneſs* in Pſal. XL. 6, &c. applied Hebr. X. 5, &c. to which being long to tranſcribe I refer. More Authoritys might be produced, but theſe are ſufficient.

In the next place that *He* took upon Himſelf, and GOD laid on Him the Iniquitys of us all: we may conſult Iſaiah LIII. applied to Bodily Diſeaſes by St Matthew VIII. 17. and to Spiritual by St Peter 1 Epiſt. II. 24. [Who his own ſelf bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree] (*a*) That He offered Himſelf a Sacrifice for the whole World, and (*b*) redeemed us unto GOD by his Blood the following paſſages will ſhow: (*a*) John I. 29. [Behold the Lamb of GOD, which taketh away the Sins of the World.] Rom. IV. 25. [Who was delivered for our Offences.] V. 6 — to 12. 1 Cor. XV. 3. we have the Apoſtle's expreſs Authority for the Doctrine of the Church. [For I delivered unto you firſt of all, that which I alſo received, how that Chriſt died for our Sins according to the Scriptures.] 2 Cor. V. 14, 21. 1 Cor. V. 7. Gal. I. 4.

preſſed in the cleareſt Terms, and amount to this, That by his *Death* He *ſatisfied* or made *Satisfaction* for the *Sins* of the whole World: whereas the *Adverſarys* deny any *Vicarial* ſuffering, any *Expiation*, and make the *Sacrifice* no more than a *Memorial* that GOD *is a Propitious Being*, and of his *Hatred to Sin*: It ſhould rather be a *Memorial* of the *Propitiation*, if any thing could be a *Memorial* of it ſelf; but *Propitiation* they deny, and contradict the whole Tenour of the *Scriptures* upon this Head, by

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I. 4. Eph. V. 2, 25. Tit. II. 14. Hebr. II. 10, to v. 18. VII. 27. X. 12. 1 Pet. III. 18. 1 John II. 2. III. 16. From all which places we may collect the true Scripture Doctrine in Scripture Terms according to the true and obvious meaning of the Words, [That Chriſt hath given Himſelf for us an Offering and a Sacrifice to GOD: That he laid down his Life for us, and that He is the Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but alſo for the Sins of the whole World.

(*b*) That He redeemed us unto GOD by his Blood. Mat. XXVI. 28. Mark XIV. 24. Luke XXII. 20. Acts VIII. 32, &c. XX. 28. [— to feed the Church of GOD, which He hath purchaſed with his own Blood:] Rom. III. 24, 25. [Being juſtified freely by his Grace through the Redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt, Whom GOD hath ſet forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood.] Eph. I. 7. [In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveneſs of Sins. 20. Having made Peace through the Blood of his Croſs.] 1 Theſſ. I. 10. Hebr. IX. 11, &c. [But Chriſt being come an High-prieſt of good Things to come &c. by his own Blood he entered in once into the Holy place, having obtained Eternal Redemption for us. For if the Blood of Bulls &c. —— How much more ſhall the Blood of Chriſt, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himſelf without ſpot to GOD, purge your Conſcience from dead Works to ſerve the Living GOD? And for this Cauſe He is the Mediator of the New Teſtament:] 26. [But now once in the End of the World hath He appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himſelf. X. 5 — 10, 19, 29. 1 Pet. I. 18, 19. cited before. 1 John I. 7. [the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all Sin.] V. 6, 8. Rev. I. 5. [waſhed us from our Sins in his own Blood.] V. 9. [Haſt redeemed us to GOD by thy Blood.] VII. 14.

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turning the plain and obvious ſenſe of the Words to a *different*, or to *no* Meaning at all.

As to the Pretence, that GOD being *Propitious* needeth not to be *propitiated*, I will only ſay, that GOD is *Propitious* as He is all *Love* and *Benevolence* in his Nature: and this Infinite *Love* inclined Him immediately to have Mercy upon *fallen* Man, and to *ſeek* and *admit* a *Satisfaction* to his *Juſtice*; But there is *another* Love, and that is the *Love* of *Union* and *Friendſhip*, which we had *broken* and *forfeited* by our Tranſgreſſion; and to *reunite* us, and *reſtore* us to *this* Love, there was a *Neceſſity* of a *Propitiation*, whereby, when we were *Enemys*, we might be *reconciled* unto GOD: That this was effected by our *Saviour*'s making an *Atonement* for our *Sins* by his *Blood*, the *Scriptures* cited and referred to abundantly declare: Upon this ground it is, that with reſpect to the *Eſſential* Love and Benevolence of GOD, we are ſaid to be [a] *juſtified freely by his Grace, thro' the Redemption that is in Chriſt, whom* GOD *hath ſet forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood*: and thus St *John* alſo teacheth us: [b] *Herein is Love, not that we loved* GOD, *but that He loved us, and ſent his Son to be a Propitiation for our Sins.*

To diſpute either about the *Nature* or *Neceſſity* of the *Satisfaction* required, when there is Nothing to be objected, as *inconſiſtent* with the *Juſtice*, *Goodneſs* or *Mercy* of GOD, is only to raiſe *precarious* Suppoſitions againſt *poſitive* Aſſertions, and under a pretence of vindicating

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a Rom. III 24, 25. b 1 John IV. 10.

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the Divine Honour to *charge* God both *fooliſhly* and *blaſphemouſly* together. *Reaſon* can diſcover *Inconſiſtencys* in Subjects within its own Comprehenſion, but every thing is not an *Inconſiſtency*, which we are not able to account for by our *Reaſon*, and for the great Work of our *Redemption*, how *Incomprehenſible* ſoever *other* Articles are, if we were to try *it* as ſtated in the *Scriptures*, by the Verdict of our *Reaſon* alone, the *Doctrine* would ſtand for ever *acquitted* of *all Objections*. Tho' *Reaſon* could not diſcover the *Method*, it can diſcern both the *Efficacy* and *Juſtice* of *it*, now *it* is diſplayed and accompliſhed in all *its* Parts. After *Man* had offended, it could hardly be a Queſtion, whether any *Satisfaction* or Reparation at all were neceſſary, and yet if *Reaſon* could not reſolve the *Neceſſity*, much leſs is *Reaſon* able to define *what* Reparation is *ſufficient*, and in *what* manner it is to be made. What ſhoweth the *Neceſſity* of any *Reparation* ſhoweth the *Neceſſity* of *this*, that was made, and *Reaſon* muſt aſſent, ſince *this* was required, that *no Leſs* would have *ſufficed*.

If God be *obliged* (as theſe Men ſay He is) to act according to the *Reaſon* and *Fitneſs of Things* as a Law *External* and *Independent* of Him, and *Previous* to Him, He is conſequently obliged to act according to *Juſtice* as well as *Mercy*, and to preſerve *both* theſe Attributes, as well as the *reſt* Inviolable: If Regard then is to be had to his *Juſtice*, *Reaſon* muſt conclude for the *Neceſſity* of ſome *Satisfaction*, and becauſe *it coſteth more to redeem a Soul*, and no *Man* can by any means *redeem his Brother*, *nor give to*

God

GOD *a Ranſom for him*, ſome other *Ranſom* muſt be found: ſince this is the Caſe, and this World will not afford a *Ranſom* or *Atonement* for our *Sins*, we muſt leave it to GOD both for the *Nature* and *Value* of *it*; and when we behold the *Ranſom* ſet forth in the *Scriptures*, and conſider with what *Solemnity*, *Order* and *Diſtinction*, the *Promiſe*, the *Types* and *Completion* of *it* have been conducted, we may conclude, that no *other* than *This*, and that *This* in no *other* manner could have availed: It is made a Queſtion, whether *this* be of GOD's *arbitrary* Appointment alone, and it is aſſerted that *it* draweth all its *Efficacy* from the *ſole* appointment of GOD: It is more proper to conſider whether *it* doth not *riſe* from the *Nature* of *Sin*, and from the *Perfections* of GOD; which require not only the *Appointment* of a *Sacrifice*, but the *Sufficiency* of *it* alſo: if the Prevalence were owing meerly to GOD's *Appointment* alone, a *Leſſer*, or *Lower* Sacrifice might have prevailed; but if beſides the *Appointment* of GOD, there be alſo an *Inherent* and *Eſſential* Excellency in the *Sacrifice* it ſelf, we may well conclude, that no *leſs* nor *meaner* could have *ſatisfied*.

The *Neceſſity* may be alſo argued from the *Value* of the Satisfaction, becauſe as without a *Neceſſity none* had been required, without the *higheſt* Neceſſity ſo *great* a *One* had not been ordained. *It* is not therefore of *Arbitrary* Appointment, becauſe then a *leſs* or *another* might have ſufficed, nor had the *Eternal* Son engaged to make *it*, if *it* could have been made any *other* way: *It* was of *Free Grace* in the *Father* to *admit*,

mit, and in the *Son* to *undertake* this great work of *Redemption*, but the *manner* of doing *it* must be suitable to the Divine *Justice* and *Mercy*; The Divine *Mercy* disposeth God to accept of a *Satisfaction* to his *Justice*; as soon as this was resolved on, the *Declaration* and *Effects* of the Divine *Mercy* appeared, and in view of the *Atonement* to be made, God was already *Propitious* to pardon and to receive Mankind to his *Grace* and *Favour*. *One* offering was *sufficient*, *He* was ordained from the *Foundation*, *but now once in the End of the World hath He appeared to put away Sin by the sacrifice of Himself*. This *Work* was of such a *nature* that no *Created* Being *durst* undertake it, or could *sustain* it, or could *merit* so highly by it: The *Merit* rose not from the *Acceptance* of God *alone*, but from the *Dignity* and *Perfection* of the *Sufferer*. As *Man* had *sinned*, *Man* was to *satisfie*: as God was *offended*, God also was to be *appeased*. *This*, as it appeareth, no One could effect but the Eternal Son, and He no *other* way, than by taking the *Nature*, that had *offended*, upon Him; and so *suffering* in the *Nature* that had *sinned* He derived a *Value* and *Merit* upon his *Sufferings* from the *Perfection* of his *Obedience*, and the *Divinity* of his *Person*. To *reconcile* Heaven and Earth *both* Natures are *joined* in his *Person*: And whatever stress seemeth to be laid upon it, that it is said, we are *reconciled* unto God, but *no* where in the *Scriptures*, that God is *reconciled* unto us, this is no other, how grave and serious soever it soundeth, than a tedious and empty *Cavil*, and a poor impertinent *Quibble*. Where it is said that

we are *reconciled* unto GOD, the *Reconciliation* is *reciprocal*, and *one* manifestly implieth the *other*: Indeed the Expression is *stronger*, that *we* are *reconciled* unto GOD, for *we* are the *Offenders*, and the *Reconciliation* is properly of the [a] *Offended* to the *Offender*, and unless GOD were *reconciled* unto us, we could never be said to be *reconciled* unto GOD: It is not supposed that *we* were *offended* with GOD and were pleased to restore *Him* to our Favour: This is a sense too *insolent* and *Ridiculous*: We are *Offenders* against Him, and had forfeited his Favour, and were at *Enmity* with GOD; when the *Enmity* was removed, we were *reconciled* unto Him, and his *Reconciliation* to us is wrought by the Method He took to *reconcile* us to Himself. If this be the proper sense of the Words, that the *Offending Party* should be *reconciled* to the *Party Offended*, before the *Party Offended* can be said to be *reconciled* to the *Offender*, there is *indeed* a Material Difference in the two Forms of Expression, and such, as shews the *Necessity* of a *Reconciliation* to be made for us, before GOD will be *reconciled* unto *us*: And as *we* have Nothing of *ourselves*, whereby we can *reconcile ourselves to our Master*, *Some* Other must work this

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a See 1 Sam. XXIX. 4. For tho' David had not realy offended *Saul*, yet He was looked upon as the Offender. Matth. V. 23. It is not, if *thou* have *ought* against thy Brother, but, if *thou remembrest that thy Brother have ought against thee — first be reconciled to thy Brother* —— Rom. V. 10. — *if when ye were Enemys, ye were reconciled unto GOD*, that is, *Offenders*, for so only are we *Enemys*. 1 Cor. VII. 11. The same Instances will shew also, that according to Natural Order and Decency the *Reconciliation* is properly expressed of the *Inferiors* to their *Superior*.

Recon-

Reconciliation for us; The Words in ordinary Use and Acceptation are applied to the *Reconciliation* of *Inferiours* to their *Superiours*, and in common Sense and Construction, when *we* are said to be *reconciled* unto GOD, it is not *our* taking Him into Ours, but his taking us into *his Favour*, that is to be understood.

There is indeed a *twofold* Reconciliation, but not in the *sense* our *Adversarys* would obtrude: *One* is the *Reconciliation* effected by *Christ*, and ascribed both to the *Father* and the *Son*: To the *Father*, as when St *Paul* teacheth, [a] *All things are of GOD, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ*: and that GOD *was in Christ reconciling the World unto Himself*: To the *Son*, Who [b] hath *reconciled both* Jew and Gentile *unto* GOD *in one Body by the Cross*: To the *Father*, [c] *For it pleased the Father, that in Him should all fulness dwell, and (having made Peace by the Blood of his Cross) by Him to reconcile all things to Himself*—: To the *Son*, [d] *And you, that were sometime alienated and Enemys in your Mind by wicked Works, yet now hath He reconciled, in the Body of his Flesh thro' Death.* [e] For *when we were Enemys we were reconciled to* GOD *by the Death of his Son.*

The *other* sense of *Reconciliation* is, Our actual embracing this *Reconciliation*, and being in very deed by *Faith* and *Repentance* reconciled unto GOD. The *Enmity* on his part is removed, and the way to *Reconciliation* is Open, [f] *For through Christ we, both* Jew and Gentile *have an Access*

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a 1 Cor. V. 18. *b* Eph. II. 16. *c* Col. I. 19, 20. *d* v. 21, 22. *e* Rom. V. 10. *f* Eph. II. 18.

by one Spirit to the Father. The *Apoſtles* had it in their Commiſſion to publiſh theſe *glad Tidings* to the World: accordingly St *Paul* [a] declares theſe *glad Tidings* to the *Jews*, and calleth himſelf an *Ambaſſador* for this Purpoſe in his ſecond *Epiſtle* to the *Corinthians*, where *both* the *ſenſes* meet, and are clearly expreſſed in that Excellent Paſſage juſt now recited for the *firſt*, and I muſt produce it again for the *ſecond* to ſhew how they ſtand together, and mutualy refer to each other, [b] *All Things are of GOD who hath reconciled us to Himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt, and hath given unto us the Miniſtry of Reconciliation, To wit, that* GOD *was in Chriſt, reconciling the World unto Himſelf, not imputing their Treſpaſſes unto them, and hath committed unto us the Word of Reconciliation.* There is the *Reconciliation* on GOD's *part*: *Now then we are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though* GOD *did beſeech you by us*: *We pray you in Chriſt's ſtead be ye reconciled to* GOD. There is the *Reconciliation* on Ours. So *weak* and *falſe* is the *Socinian* Objection, of ſo *little* Weight, and ſo *far* from Truth their *Obſervation*, that the *Contrary* is indeed the Truth. When we are ſaid to be *reconciled* to GOD by *Chriſt*, the true meaning is, that GOD is *reconciled* unto us, and we are therefore moſt earneſtly exhorted to accept this gracious Favour, and on our *parts* to be *reconciled* to Him.

In the ſame ſenſe, in which our *Bleſſed Lord* is ſet forth in the *Holy Scriptures* as a *Redeemer*, He is alſo our *Mediator* and *Interceſſor*: Our *Me-*

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a Acts XIII. 32. b 2 Cor. V. 18, 19, 20.

diator

diator (as in other regards) with ſpecial reſpect to that *Sacrifice* He *offered* up to GOD on our Behalf. [a] *And for this cauſe He is the Mediator of the New Teſtament*: Our *Interceſſor*, as *He preſents* our *Prayers* to the Throne of Grace, and *pleadeth* the *Merits* of his *Death* on our behalf, that as He hath *redeemed* us, [b] *who are by Nature the Children of Wrath*, from our *Original Guilt*, and the *Condemnation* conſequent thereupon, He may *redeem* us alſo from all our *Actual ſins*: From the *Power* of them by his *Grace*, and from the *Puniſhment* of them by his *own Blood*, by [c] *which He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained Eternal Redemption for us.* Thus He is our *Advocate* and *Interceſſor* according to thoſe comfortable Words of St *John*, [d] *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, and He is the Propitiation for our ſins.* This alſo is *founded* in, and *riſeth* from his *Prieſtly* Office; for [e] *this Man becauſe He continueth for ever, hath an Unchangeable Prieſthood. Wherefore He is able alſo to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto* GOD *by Him, ſeeing He ever liveth to make Interceſſion for them.*

If we take the Doctrine of our *Redemption* in the plain and obvious ſenſe of the *Scriptures*, we ſhall without any Difficulty ſee the true Meaning and Purport of it, and at the ſame time diſcern, how *forced* and *unnatural* all thoſe *Interpretations* are, which run this great *Tranſaction* into *Metaphor* and *Alluſion* only, not only

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a Hebr. IX. 15. *b* Epheſ. II. 3. *c* Hebr. IX. 12. *d* 1 John II. 1, 2. *e* Hebr. VII. 24. 25.

perverting the ſettled meaning of the *Words* in all *Languages*, but *denying* alſo *Hiſtorical* Truth, and plain *matter of Fact*. Tho' we cannot exactly parallel the *Redemption* of Mankind by the *Death of Chriſt* with the *Redemption* of *Captives* and *Criminals* by *Exchange* of *Perſons*, or *paying* down the *Price* and *Ranſom* agreed upon, tho' *ſatisfying* for *Sins* is not exactly like *diſcharging* a *Debt*, becauſe GOD is to be looked upon, not only as our *Creditor*, but even in that *Parable of the* [a] *Cruel ſervant*, as our *Lord* and *Maſter* alſo, and we cannot argue *Literaly* in every Circumſtance from *one* Caſe to the *other*: If we know not in *what* manner our Bleſſed Lord *firſt* offered his *Mediation* between GOD and Man, and *afterwards* performed *it*, any farther, than the outward Action informeth us: If we cannot ſtate the full *Value*, (as how ſhould we) of his *Ineſtimable* Blood, nor can tell, how He *interceedeth* for us, in what *Words* and *Geſture*, ſtill we may be firmly aſſured of our *Redemption*, and of his *Mediation* and *Interceſſion*: Where there is a *Reality* in the *Correſpondence*, the *Conceptions* and *Language* are truly *Analogical*, and as long as we know the *Literal* ſignification among Men of a *Redeemer* from *Captivity*, and *Bondage*, and *Death*, by Reaſon of *War*, of *Debt*, and of *Capital Offences*, by *Exchange and ſubſtitution*, by *Payment*, *Price* and *Ranſom*, we are at no Loſs to underſtand *what* is meant by this *Language*, when applied to our *Spiritual* Eſtate.

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[a] Matth. XVIII. 23, &c.

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There is moreover a *Correſpondence* between *Rebels* againſt *Earthly Kings* and *States*, who forfeit their *Liberty* and *Life*, and are *attainted* in *themſelves* and their *Children*, and *Rebels* againſt God, as there is alſo between the *Pardon* and *Reſtoration* of *both* from their *ſentence* and *Attainder*, evident and *juſt* enough to give us proper *Notions* under theſe Expreſſions of our *Redemption*. The *Price*, whether it be *Gold*, *Silver*, or *Blood*, is *equaly* a *Price*, and the *Value* maketh no *other* Difference, than there is between a *Greater* and *Leſs*. With reſpect to God, *whoever* delivereth us from the *Curſe* and *Forfeiture* of the *Law* is our *Redeemer*, with reference to *Sin* and *Bondage* He that maketh us *Free* is as properly our *Redeemer* alſo, as *he*, that *delivereth* us from *Turkiſh* Slavery and Captivity: There is no difference, but in the *Kind* of *Bondage*, and the *Superexcellence* of the *Price*, and of the *Perſon*, that payeth *it*; the *Analogy* holdeth as far as it can, and only faileth on our *ſide* of the *Compariſon*, where all *Human* things fall ſhort, and reach not the *Value* and *Perfection* of *Divine*.

I thought it neceſſary ſo far to fix the *Doctrine* of *our Redemption* agreably to the *true* Meaning and Signification of the *Scripture Terms*, according to their *Analogical* Acceptation in *Oppoſition* to that *Figurative* and *Allegorical* Account, which explaineth away every part of this Doctrine, and denieth the *Death* and *Sufferings* of *Chriſt* to be a proper *Sacrifice* and *Propitiation* for our *ſins*.

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Indeed a *Figurative* Perſon can only make a *Figurative* Satisfaction, and thoſe, who deny our Lord to be the Eternal Son of GOD cannot account, *how* a *Creature* alone, much leſs, *how* a *meer* Man can *ſatisfie* for the *ſins* of the whole World. Perfect *Innocence* can only avail the Man himſelf who poſſeſſeth it, and even the *Innocence* of the Sufferer is in this Caſe made an *Objection* to the *Juſtice* of GOD.

But we bleſs GOD, *who* of his *Infinite Mercy* hath appointed this great *Atonement*, and we bleſs our Lord JESUS CHRIST, *who* of his *infinite Love* [a] offered Himſelf up a *ſacrifice* for our *ſins*: who [b] *freely* laid down his Life for us, and ſubmitted to his Father's [c] *Will*, and ſuffered according to the [d] *Determinate Counſel and Foreknowledge of* GOD: Who therefore *Miraculouſly* [e] delivered Himſelf, [f] and eſcaped from all the *Popular* Attempts and Fury of his *Enemies*, [g] and tho' He could ſtill *deliver*, yet He *yielded Himſelf* at *laſt*, when his *Hour was come* according to the *exact* Time [h] *prefixed* and [i] *foretold*; and *punctualy* [k] fulfilled every *Prophecy* relating to the *Kind* and *Manner* of his *Death* in *every* Circumſtance, till at laſt He cryed out, [l] *It is Finiſhed*, and *yielded up the Ghoſt*.

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a Hebr. IX. 25, 26. *b* John X. 17, 18. *c* Matt. XXVI. 39, 42. Mark XIV. 36. Luke XXII. 42. John IV. 34. V. 30. Hebr. X. 7, &c. *d* Acts II. 23. *e* Luke IV. 30. John VIII. 59. *f* X. 39. *g* XVIII. 6. Mat. XXVI. 53. *h* Dan. IX. 24, 26, &c. *i* Beſides the Prophecys of the Old Teſtament, Mat. XIX. 18, 19. Mar. X. 32. Luke XVIII. 31, 32, 33. John III. 14. XII. 32, 33. XVIII. 32. *k* For this ſee the Hiſtory of the Paſſion. *l* John XIX. 30.

Thus

Thus we oppoſe *real* Facts to *imaginary* Suppoſitions, and *plain* Conſtruction to *figurative* Interpetation; and until it can be made appear from the *Scriptures* that no *Reparation* is *required*, and from *Reaſon* that *none ought* to be *required*, or if *any* be *needful*, that *Man* can *ſatisfie* for his *own ſins*; and that *Repentance alone* is that *ſatisfaction*: That *Human* Virtue will be accepted, *accompanied* and *qualified* with *Human Frailty*, and moreover *mixed* and *diverſified* with *Vice*, and all upon *Repentance* alone, *imperfect*, as the *beſt* of our *Actions*, and *followed* by an *Obedience*, as *imperfect*, as *that*, which went *before*: as *this* is generaly the *Caſe* of the *beſt* Men in the *Practice* of *Moral* Duty upon the *bare* Principles of *Reaſon* alone, we ſhall do well to *hold faſt* the *bleſſed Hope*, and *embrace* thoſe *exceeding great* and *precious Promiſes*, *which are given unto us* in the *Goſpel*, where we are taught, that *Chriſt* hath once [a] *ſuffered for ſin, the Juſt for the Unjuſt, that He might bring us to* God: That the [b] *Imputation* of *Adam*'s *ſin* is taken off by the *Imputation* of *Chriſt's Righteouſneſs*, that our *Nature*, [c] which is *Corrupt* in *Adam*, is *purified* and *renewed* in *Chriſt*: [d] That *as by Man came Death, by Man came alſo the Reſurrection of the Dead*; and *that as in Adam all die, in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.*

I proceed now to conſider thirdly

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a 1 Pet. III. 18. *b* Rom. V. 18, 19. X. 4. 1 Cor. I. 30. 2 Cor. V. 21. *c* Rom. V. 12, &c. 2 Cor. V. 17. Gal. VI. 15. Epheſ. II. 15. IV. 23, 24. Coloſſ. III. 10. Tit. III. 5. *d* Rom. V. 12, &c. 1 Cor. XV. 21, 22.

3. The *Revelation* God hath given us with regard to the *Ordinary* Courſe of his *Providence*, in which, as well as in the *Extraordinary* Work of our *Redemption*, we find Him putting on the the *Paſſions* and *Affections* of *our Nature*, and taking to Himſelf the *Organs* of our *Senſes*, and the *Members* of our *Body*, and ſince the *ſame* Expreſſions are uſed in *all* his *Tranſactions* with Mankind, I have choſen to conſider *them* under the *general* Order of his Providence in his *Government* of the World, and exacting *Obedience* to his *Laws*.

As God is a moſt Pure and Simple Being, without *Body*, *Parts* and *Paſſions*, He admits no mixture or variation in his Nature, and therefore the Language, which aſcribeth theſe unto Him, is wholy *Figurative*, and *Metaphorical*.

This is ever and unvariably true without Exception, with regard to all Expreſſions taken from the *Organs* of our *Senſes*, or the *Members* of our *Body*: but with regard to our *Paſſions* and *Affections*, becauſe the *ſame* Words are uſed to ſignifie the *Perfections* of God, and the *Moral* Excellencys as well as the *Paſſions*, & *Affections* of Men, we muſt therefore carefuly diſtinguiſh between the *Analogical* Conception, and the *Figurative* Expreſſion, that is, when the *ſame* Words do correſpond to our *Moral* Perfections, which do alſo expreſs our *Natural* Affections: ſince by the *one* are repreſented his *Attributes*, by the *other* the *motives* and *manner* of His *exerciſing* them towards us.

This promiſcuous uſe of Words to ſignify things ſo widely different in themſelves, is owing to the near Affinity there ſeemeth to be in our

our Nature, between the moſt laudable of our *Paſſions* and *Affections*, ſuch as *Love* and *Commiſeration*, and the ſublimeſt of our *moral* Perfections, which are alſo called *Love* and *Mercy*, when Man is conſidered according to the *Uprightneſs* and *Rectitude*, and not according to the *Declivity* and *Iniquity* of his Nature, and therefore we muſt diſtinguiſh again between *Love*, and *Joy*, and *Mercy*, and *Grief*, as ſeated in the *Underſtanding*, and as riſing from the *ſenſual Appetites*: In the *firſt* conſideration they are *Intellectual* Perfections, in the *ſecond* they are *Carnal* Affections: The *firſt* hold the higheſt place in the Roll of *Moral* Virtues, and are advanced ſtill higher in the Rank of *Evangelical* Graces: The *other* are only the *ſubject matter* of our *Duty* in the due Reſtraint and Direction of *them*: The *firſt* are always rightly and properly denominated: the *latter* are only entituled to the *ſame* Name, when they are employed upon proper Objects, and kept within proper Bounds. In us therefore they are to be conſidered, as *Moral* Perfections in *one reſpect*, and as *Human* Paſſions, and *Natural* Affections in *another*. In GOD they are *firſt* to be placed among his Perfections and Attributes in Correſpondence to the *like* Moral Endowments of our Minds, and then to be looked upon, as *Repreſentations* of the *Motives* by which He acts, and of the *Exerciſe* of thoſe Perfections in the Government of the World.

The *Paſſions* not regulated by *Reaſon* differ nothing from the Impetuoſity of *Brutes*, only they are worſe, and more pernicious in *Men*; be-

becauſe to *Brutes Nature* herſelf is the *Boundary*, and *Limit* of them, but *Reaſon*, when *it* doth not reſtrain them in Men, ſerveth only to make them more Fatal in their Contrivances and Attempts for the Gratification of them: As in the *violence* and *ſenſuality* of theſe *Paſſions* and *Affections* Man beareth an *Analogy* to *Brutes*, in the *due* Government, Direction and Regulation of *them*, theſe *Affections* bear ſome *Analogy* to our *Moral* Perfections, and for this reaſon they have *both* the *ſame* Denomination, and becauſe of the *Analogy* between *Moral* Perfections *Human* and *Divine*, they obtain the *ſame* Denomination, when applied to God alſo. As *Moral* Perfections therefore they are truly *Analogical*, as *Natural* Affections, when applied to God, they are only *Figurative* Expreſſions.

Love and *Pity*, and *Mercy* and *Compaſſion*, conſidered, as *Human Affections*, have no Room in *Divine* Nature, but conſidered, as *Moral* Excellencys they are correſpondent to the *ſimilar* Perfections of God: Thus *Love*, as a *Paſſion* approacheth not the *Divine* Nature, as a *Moral* Perfection, it is, as it were the *Eſſence* of the *Divine* Being. *For* [a] God *is Love*, He is *Love* with regard to his *Moral*, *and* God *is* [b] *Light* with reſpect to his *Intellectual* Perfections. And as among Men [c] *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, and ſo comprehendeth all other Dutys: In the Divine Nature alſo Love, *infinite Love*, is the Crown and Completion, and Comprehenſion of all Perfection: In like manner thoſe *Kindred*

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a 1 John IV. 16. *b* I. 5. *c* Rom. XIII. 10.

per-

Perfections, as I may call them, of *Joy* and *Grief*, of *Tenderneſs* and *Pity*, may be conſidered in GOD, as ever flowing from the Eternal Fountain of his *Love*; and in *us* likewiſe, tho' they are commonly eſteemed *Affections*, they may be properly conſidered as ſo many *ſtreams* from the never failing Spring of *Chriſtian* Love, and Charity. Under the Character therefore of *Moral* Perfections we may conceive an *Analogy* between the *Kindneſs* and *Love* of GOD and of *Men*; But becauſe He acteth in a *different* manner from *us*, He giveth us to underſtand his *Love* by the Correſpondence our *Love* is ſuppoſed to hold with the *Divine* Benevolence, and repreſenteth the *Exerciſe* of it under the deareſt and tendereſt *Affections* of our *Nature*. Accordingly, as a *Father*, we ſee our gracious GOD putting on *Paternal Affections*, and expreſſing them in the warmeſt, and moſt moving Terms: Sometimes in the way of Similitude, [a] *Like as a Father pitieth his own Children, ſo the Lord pitieth them, that fear Him.* [b] *Can a Woman forget her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have Compaſſion on the Son of her Womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.* [c] *When my Father and my Mother forſake me, then the Lord will take me up.* Sometimes in *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Alluſions. So the *Prophet* with great Earneſtneſs cryeth out, [d] *Where is thy Zeal and thy Strength, and the ſounding of thy Bowels, and thy Mercys?* and thus GOD Himſelf in the

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a Pſal. CIII. 13. *b* Iſ. XLIX. 15. *c* Pſal. XXVII. 10. *d* Iſ. LXIII. 15.

ſtrongeſt

ſtrongeſt and tendereſt Terms expreſſeth the Struggle and Contention of his *Love*, when *Iſrael* had provoked Him to the laſt Degree, [a] *How ſhall I give thee up Ephraim? how ſhall I deliver thee Iſrael? How ſhall I make thee as Admah, how ſhall I ſet thee as Zeboim? my Heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.*

In the *Conſtitution* of Man there is another *Paſſion*, which is oppoſed to *Love*, and from which *contrary* Affections riſe: And this is *Anger* with all its *Train* of *Hatred*, *Cruelty* and *Revenge*: *Theſe* cannot in the *leaſt* Degree be conceived in GOD, as *they* ſhew *themſelves* in *us*; for tho' duely regulated *Anger* and *Puniſhment* is founded in the very *Exiſtence* and *Reaſon* of things, and exerted by *Divine* Authority for the *Vindication* of his *Laws*, and by *Human* Authority alſo *derived* from *Divine*, for the ſame *great* and *neceſſary* End, yet as *Anger* breaketh out in *Private* Men, and upon *Private* Occaſions, accompanied with *Hatred* and *Malice* and *implacable* Thirſt of Revenge, it is a ſinful *Paſſion*, and *Revenge* is a ſure Token of an *infirm* and *little* Mind; and therefore, tho' it pleaſeth GOD, as a *Lawgiver*, and a *Judge*, to utter Himſelf ſometimes in the terms of theſe more violent Paſſions, yet we are aſſured from the Strength and Perfection of his Nature, that *He is not a Man of like Paſſions with us*, that He ſhould be *moved*, nor the Son of Man, that He ſhould be *diſcompoſed*; But tho' we cannot aſcribe *Anger*, nor any of

[a] Hoſ. XI. 8.

the

the more violent *Affections* unto Him, nor conceive of his *Anger* as a *Paſſion* and *Commotion* of the Mind, yet from his *Declarations* made againſt *Sin*, and the *Puniſhment*, He both *threatneth* and *inflicteth* upon *ſinners*, we may learn that his *Diſapprobation* of Sin is as *great*, as Sin it *ſelf* is *contrary* to the *Eſſential* Holineſs and Purity of his Nature; and therefore tho' there be no proper *Analogy* between the *Anger* of Men, and the *Diſpleaſure* of GOD, as *Anger* is a *Paſſion* implanted in *us*, yet there is a proper and true *Analogy* between *Human* Puniſhment and *Divine*; and the *Anger of the Lord* is *ſo* called from the dreadful *Effects*, that *follow* upon the *Provocations* of obſtinate and impenitent Sinners both in this World, and the *Next*.

Thus alſo we may underſtand in what ſenſe *Vengeance* is aſcribed unto GOD, not as implying any *revengeful* Thought or Diſpoſition of Mind, but the *Vindication* of his *Honour* on the *Violators* of his *Laws*, and the *Defence* of the *Poor* againſt their great *Oppreſſors*. In this ſenſe it is a *Royal* and *Peculiar Prerogative* of his *Throne*: [a] *Vengeance is mine, I will repay, ſaith the Lord*, and *this* no Man may *uſurp*, nor is it *lawful* to exerciſe it unleſs it be *delegated* unto him. Herein is founded a true *Analogy* between the *King* of *Kings*, and thoſe *Princes* that *reign by Him*; and this will help us to conceive as we ought of the Divine *Vengeance* and *Diſpleaſure*. Thus the *Prince*, who is the *Vicegerent* and *Miniſter* of God, is by his Divine *Commiſſion a* [b] *Re-*

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[a] Rom. XII. 19. [b] XIII. 4.

venger

venger to execute Wrath upon him that doth Evil; but *this* he *executeth* without any *Rage* in his *Mind*, or *Rancour* in his *Heart*: To take *Vengeance* and to execute *Wrath* is not therefore to *let loose* a *Passion*, but to *discharge* a *Duty*: *Justice* is never *Angry*, and *Earthly* Magistrates do herein imitate the *One* Supreme *Lawgiver*, [a] *who is able to save and to destroy*, inasmuch, as the *Anger* of God and the King is not seen in the *Violence* of *Passion*, but in the *Execution* of the *Laws*. So far then the *Correspondence* holdeth, only, as in all other *Analogys* between *Earth* and *Heaven*, *Human* Punishments both for *Pain* and *Duration* are but *weak* and *short* Resemblances of *Divine*, and therefore however the *Expressions* setting forth the *Wrath* of God are *Figurative*, the *Punishment* of Offenders is Terrible and Real: It is *greater* and more *dreadful*, than the fiercest Expressions drawn from the *Anger*, and *Vengeance*, and *Inflictions* of Men are able to represent in any just *Proportion* and *Degree*; and therefore to awaken the Care and Conscience of Men, it hath pleased God in great Mercy to *set forth* his *Terrors* in the *strongest figures* of *Torment*, *Horror* and *Despair*, and to give some Tokens and Sketches of them in his fearful Judgments upon *Persons*, *Citys*, and *Nations*, making them [b] *Ensamples to the Ungodly*, *as* [c] *Sodom and Gomorrha are set forth for an Example suffering the Vengeance of Eternal Fire.*

Knowing therefore [d] *the Terror of the Lord we persuade Men*, not by representing Him as a

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a Jam. IV. 12. *b* 2 Pet. II. 6. *c* Jude v. 7. *d* 2 Cor. V. 11.

Cruel

Cruel and Revengeful Being, but as He hath repreſented Himſelf in the *Revelations* He hath made of his Wrath againſt *Blaſphemers* and all *Impenitent* Sinners.

I will only add, that altho' the ſeveral Expreſſions of *Love*, and *Anger*, in all their ſeveral Operations, taken from the *Bowels* and Compaſſion, the *Rage* and *Provocation* of Men, are meerly *Figurative*, yet we muſt not imagine that they are of no ſignification, or that God is a *Cruel*, *a Careleſs*, or a *Changeable* Being.

Againſt the Truth of theſe Repreſentations it is argued, that God is not a *Revengeful* and *Implacable* Being, implying, that theſe Judgments do ſuppoſe or make *Him* ſuch. Preſuming then that *they* are not true, and ſhall not be *executed*, as *they* are *threatened*, theſe ſame Men treat *them* as vain and empty Terrors: And again, as God is repreſented to be *angry* and *reconciled*, to *threaten*, and *repent* with regard to the *ſame* Perſons, and People, as they are *obedient* or *diſobedient* to his Word, *theſe* Adverſarys repreſent Him as an *Inconſtant* and *Changeable* Being.

He is abſolved from *Cruelty* and *Revenge* by the Authority and *Sanction* of his *Laws*, which are not *Arbitrary* and *Poſitive* alone, but *Moral* and *Eternal* as his own *Truth* and *Rectitude*, in which they do ever *exiſt*, and from which, in the *ſeveral* Periods of Creation (if intelligent Beings have been created at *ſeveral* times) *that Reaſon* and *Fitneſs* of things, which is the *immediate* Law of all *Moral Agents*, are *derived*. The *Penaltys* follow from the *Rules* of his *Juſtice*,

and the *nature* of the *Offenders*, and the *degrees* of their *Offences*; But his *Mercys* all along ſhine forth in the conſtant Care, and Sollicitude, He hath expreſſed, and the effectual means, He hath provided, for the Salvation of all Men, who will turn unto Him; Even his *Threatnings* are an Evidence of his *Love*, and the Arrangement of his Terrors a Powerful Call to Repentance; And for the Execution of them at the laſt Day, we ſhall find, that notwithſtanding the Blaſphemys and Accuſations of Unbelieving Men, [a] *He will be juſtified in his ſaying, and clear when He is judged.*

But altho' He be *Merciful*, He is not a *Careleſs* and *Indolent* Being, *Unmindful* of Men's *Behaviour*, and *Inſenſible* of his *Honour*; for He hath declared, that *He is Strong and Mighty, a* [b] *Dreadful, and a* [c] *Jealous* GOD: Jealous of his *Honour*, and Mighty to maintain it; and unleſs it can be proved from clear Principles of *Reaſon* that it is inconſiſtent with Eſſential Goodneſs to inflict any *Penaltys* upon Tranſgreſſors, and that neither His *Juſtice* nor *Honour* require Him to puniſh the *Rebellious* and *Diſobedient*: that Men are under *Obligation* to *Duty* without being *accountable* for their *Offences*: that the *Reaſon* and *Fitneſs* of things is their *ſole* Rule, and that as *theſe* need no *Lawgiver* to conſtitute *them*, neither do they need *any* to exact a *Conformity* of Men's *Actions* to *them*, it is both *weak* and *wicked*, and to *no* Purpoſe, but to ſooth Men in their Sins, and lull them into a fatal Security,

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a Pſal. LI. 4. b Mal. I. 14. c Exod. XX. 5.

to

to maintain, that GOD not being liable to *Passion* and *Commotion* of Mind is not *affected* by Man's *Obedience* or *Disobedience*, & therefore *wanteth* no *Reparation* of his *Honour*, and will not *punish*, *not* any further at most, than the *Good* and *Amendment* of the *Offenders* shall require. This I have touched upon before, but as here it offers again, I will only say, that his *Honour* respects all other parts of the *Intelligent* Creation in whose Eyes He is *dishonoured*, and the *Vindication* of his *Honour* is therefore *Necessary*, as long, as He requireth *Reverence* to his *Name*, and *Obedience* to his *Laws*, that is as long as *Laws* are *necessary* to the *Government* and *Administration* of the *Moral* World. Into *Heaven* no *Evil* thing can enter, and unless the *Adversarys* of *Religion* can prove, that there is not in the *Reason* of things as close a Connection between *Sin* and *Misery*, as there is between *Happiness* and *Obedience*, that we stand in *no Relation* to GOD as our *Sovereign* Lord, and that *Punishment* follows not upon *that* Relation, or at least that Sinners can repent *after* Death, and be converted *after* Judgment, it is plain that the *Reason* of their *Punishment* will subsist as long as their *Being*, and a *fixed* Contradiction to *Holiness* must be an *Eternal* Exclusion from *Happiness*: Men are ready enough to receive all that is spoken of the *Divine Love*, and *Mercy*, and *Goodness*, but they ought in the *same* proportion to regard what is said of his *Anger*; For as it is true that GOD *is Love*, it is true also, [a] *that our* GOD *is a consuming Fire.*

a Hebr. XII. 29.

His *Love* and *Anger*, his *Mercy* and *Juſtice* are *duely* tempered together, and yet from the *alternate* Exerciſe of them upon *proper* Objects, God is again miſrepreſented as an *Inconſtant and Changeable* Being. To which we anſwer,

That *this* Conduct inferreth not any *change*, or ſo much as *changeableneſs* in the Divine *Nature*, nor any *Inconſtancy* or *Variation* in his *Will*, but ſetteth forth the *fixed*, and *unvariable* Rule of his Actions, and the *ſettled* Determination and *Immutability* of his Final *Sentence* on the *Righteous* and the *Wicked*; when He *threatneth* and *exhorteth* he ſpeaketh indeed in the *Paſſions* and *Affections* of *Men*, but thereby ſignifieth alſo the moſt *certain* Effects of his *Love* and *Diſpleaſure* ſuited to the *reſpective* Changes and Alterations of *us* his *Servants* in our *Obedience* and *Diſobedience* to his *Laws*: He *puniſheth* without *Paſſion*, and *repenteth* without *Changing*, according as *we* his poor Cteatures do *ſin* and *repent*: *We* are ever *Mutable* and *Unſtable*, but [a] *He is the ſame, and with Him* [b] *there is no variableneſs, neither ſhadow of turning.*

Of thoſe *other* Expreſſions, in which it hath pleaſed God to take upon *Him* the *Organs* of our *Senſes*, and the *Members* of our *Body* I have ſpoken ſo much, that there is the leſs Occaſion of ſpeaking any more: *They* are altogether *Figurative* Forms of Speech applied to thoſe *Conceptions* we have already framed of his *Knowledge*, *Preſence*, *Providence* and *Power*. In the *Divine* Being there is *Nothing Correſpondent* to the

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a Hebr. I. 12. b Jam. I. 17.

Senſes,

Senſes and *Organs* of Man's *Body*; but there is *ſomething anſwerable* in the *Effects* well underſtood by God's *obſerving* our *Actions*, *receiving* our *Prayers*, and *accepting* our *ſpiritual Sacrifices*: In the ſame manner the *Breath* of his *Noſtrils*. and the *Breath* of his *Mouth*: The *Operations* of his *Hand*, and his *outſtretched Arm* ſignify the ſeveral *effects* of his *Power* and *Providence*, both *Natural* and *Miraculous*: The wonderful *Effects* we *ſee*, yet *how* they were produced, we could not *underſtand*, but by a *Language* thus ſuited to our Capacitys: So again the *Face* and *Countenance* of God are uſed to expreſs his *Favour* or *Diſpleaſure*, as it is ſaid, [a] *The Face of the Lord is againſt them that do Evil*; [b] *His Countenance will behold the thing that is Juſt.*

There is a plain and evident *Diſtinction* of *each* from *other* between the *Figurative*, the *Literal* and *Analogical* Forms of Speech, and with the *Diſtinction* there is alſo a *Connection* and *Dependance* of *each* upon the *other*. The *Figurative* always ſuppoſeth a *Literal* or *Analogical* ſenſe, and the *Analogical* a *Literal*, and therefore the ſame things are to be taken *Literaly* in *Fact*, which are firſt *Analogicaly* conceived, and then *Figuratively* Expreſſed, Thus for an Inſtance of theſe *Figurative* Forms *paſſing* thro' an *Analogical*, and *terminating* in a *Literal* ſenſe, we read, [c] *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Hoſt of them by the Breath of his Mouth.* Here theſe Expreſſions may be conſidered as *Figurative* ſo far, as they *allude* to *Human* Speech,

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a Pſal. XXXIV. 16. b XI. 7. c XXXIII. 6.

and the *Instruments thereof*: *Analogical*, so far, as they *correspond* to an *Efficient* Command: and strictly *Literal*, as it is asserted, that the *Heavens* were made by the *Eternal* [a] WORD, and *all the Host of them* by the *Eternal* [b] Spirit.

By using this *Language*, and conveying *Himself* to our Minds by these *Conceptions*, GOD hath *authorised* this way of Speaking: We cannot see *Him*, nor conceive of *Him*, as *He is*: so *far*, as our present Facultys are able to apprehend *Him*, and in *such* manner, as we are able to *think* and to *speak* of *Him*: *He* hath revealed *Himself* to us, and when we would consider *Him* in our own minds, or express *Him* to others, (whatever some *Rapturous* and *Enthusiastical* Imaginations may dream) we cannot form any other *Thoughts*, nor invent any other *Language*, but we are lost and swallowed up in the Unfathomable Gulph of an *Infinite* Being, and all beyond is Dark and Incomprehensible. Otherwise there would be nor *Distance*, *nor Difference* between GOD and Us, if Human Thoughts could reach, and were of *Compass* to *comprehend* the *Eternal* Majesty and *Essence*, together with the *Wisdom* and *Counsel* of the *Almighty*.

From what hath been discoursed so largely upon this Subject, we may now by way of Recollection understand, *first* the *Necessity*, *secondly* the *Propriety* of this *Analogy* to *express* things of a *Divine* and *Invisible* Nature.

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a Joh. I. 3. Hebr. I. 10. *b* Job XXVI. 13.

1. The *Neceſſity* of it is Evident, becauſe we have no *primary* and *adequate* Expreſſions for them. We can *expreſs* them only, as we are able to *conceive* them, and as our *Conceptions* cannot, neither can our *Expreſſions* reach fully to them. We are often able to *conceive*, at leaſt we imagine ſo, what we are not able to *expreſs*: but he, that pretendeth to *expreſs* more than he *conceiveth*, ſpeaketh without any meaning, and in Effect ſaith Nothing at all. As our *Conceptions* therefore are originaly borrowed from Senſible Objects, and Created Beings, our *Language* is ſo too: and where we cannot know unto the utmoſt Perfection, but only in a certain *Proportion* and Degree, there our *Language* muſt be, as our *Knowledge* is, *Analogous* to the Things we ſpeak of. We can ſpeak of another World only in the *Language* of this, and expreſs *what* otherwiſe, or of our ſelves we *knew not*, only by *what* we *know*. And thus *what may be known of* God *is manifeſt*, ſo far as God *hath ſhewed it unto us*. In this ſenſe alſo the *Apoſtle*'s Reaſoning would be juſt, and as from the *Creation* we draw an Argument of a *Creator* founded in the *Analogy* between the wonderful *Effects* and the *ſupreme Cauſe*, ſo from the *Effects* we are taught to *expreſs* the *Almighty Cauſe* in that *Analogy* of *Language*, which thoſe great and marvelous Works furniſh us with in uttering our moſt exalted Notions of *his Eternal Power, and GOD-HEAD.*

Thus alſo when the *Divine Operations* and *Oeconomy* are declared in the great Work of our *Redemption*, and the Terms *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*

Ghoſt are more fully revealed in their ſeveral *Perſonal* Diſtinctions both of *Action* and *Relation*, we muſt *expreſs* theſe in the ſame *Analogy* of *Language* they are *revealed* in: and becauſe Words, otherwiſe familiar to us, are made uſe of, which cannot be ſtrictly underſtood as in *Human Relations* and *Operations*, and yet are to be underſtood as *Aſſertions* of ſo many *Facts* and *Realitys*, we are therefore neceſſarily to underſtand them in the way of *Analogy* ſuitable to the Diſtance and Difference between God and *us*: and thus as they were revealed by the *Holy Ghoſt*, the *Scriptures*, which contain the *Revelation*, are alſo the *Words*, *which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth.*

2. From what hath been ſaid appears the *Propriety* of this *Analogical* Language, that is indeed no other than the *Scripture* Language, which borroweth the Words of Men and applieth them to God; For as our Notions of Worldly Things, are not *ſtrictly* applicable, but indeed at an *Infinite* Diſtance from the Divine Nature, the *Scripture* uſeth the beſt Expreſſions, we have, to give us ſuch Conceptions of the Divine Being, as we are capable of. Thus the *Spirit* of God takes the *Language* of Men and *Conſecrates* it to his own Service: there is an *Appropriation* of Phraſe and Sentiments in all the Holy *Writings*; Thus the *outward Viſible Church* with the *Rites* and *Inſtitutions* belonging to *it* are expreſſed, tho' in the *ſame* Words, which *Civil* Writers uſe, yet with a *different Propriety* and Application: So that there is a *Sacred* and *Religious* uſe of Words borrowed from

from thoſe *Languages* which were then in Being, and applied in an *Analogical* manner to the *Aſſemblys*, the *Rites*, the *Myſterys*, the *Worſhip* and *Inſtitutions* of the *Chriſtian Church*; and as theſe Words are uſed in a peculiar ſenſe by the *Sacred* and *Chriſtian* Writers, they form as it were a peculiar *Language*. But as theſe are borrowed to expreſs the *real Church* and *Miniſters* of *Chriſt* in their ſeveral *Orders*, together with the *Rites* and *Inſtitutions* of his *Religion*, in like manner the Common *Language* of Men is made uſe of to expreſs ſuch *real Facts* or *Doctrines*, as are *revealed* in the *Holy Scriptures* concerning the *Divine Nature*, and the great Work of our *Redemption*; in both the Expreſſions are *Analogical*, and if we ſee the *Analogy* more perfectly in things belonging to the *Viſible Church*; it is no leſs *real* in all Points belonging to the *Inviſible*: and if there is a *Propriety* in the *Language*, we uſe, when we ſpeak of God, and his *Attributes* according to the ſentiments of *Natural* Religion, there is no leſs *Propriety* when we ſpeak of God according to *Revealed*: And what is *Revealed* is as *Real* as are his *Attributes*, and *both* as *Incomprehenſible* as they are *Real*.

What I have now delivered comes to this Concluſion, that this *Analogy* conveyeth to us the *real* Nature and Perfections of God ſo far as we are able to conceive or expreſs them, together with all his Tranſactions with Mankind, and therefore it cannot be interpreted in a meer *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* ſenſe, nor yet in a *groſs* and *literal* manner, but in ſuch a way, as is *ſuitable* to the *Divine Nature* and *Actions*.

In

In this we ſhall be directed by the *Analogy* of *Faith*, and ſo be taught to underſtand what is aſſerted concerning the *Eternal God-Head* according to the *proper* and *obvious* Signification of the Words, in which the great *Myſterys* of our *Faith* are revealed: And then it will appear, that the *Divine Relations* of *Father* and *Son*, and *the Perſonal Diſtinction of the Holy Ghoſt* in the *ſame Eſſence* are as *Real*, as the *Divine Eſſence* and *Attributes* themſelves: That our *Redemption* is *properly ſuch* upon a *Satisfaction realy made*, and that our *Inheritance* is *Real*, becauſe *Eternal in the Heavens.*

Of which Eternal Inheritance may we all be Partakers by the Mediation of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Sanctification of the Holy Ghoſt. To whom &c.

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SERMON VI.

Preached *Apr.* 24. 1729.

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1 Cor. II. 13.

—— *Comparing Spiritual Things with Spiritual.*

IN my laſt Diſcourſe, I propoſed to eſtabliſh ſome *Rules* for the right *Underſtanding* of *Divine* Truths, and for the *Interpretation* of the *Scriptures*, which convey them to us.

In Order to this I proceeded to ſhow,

I. *Negatively*, That *Divine* Truths, and particularly the great *Myſterys* of *Revelation* are *not* taught in the ſame manner with *Secular* Sciences,

Sciences, or that *Divine* Learning is to be taught in a *different* way from *Human* — *Which things alſo we ſpeak, not in the Words, which Man's Wiſdom teacheth.*

II. To ſhow *Poſitively* that *They* are to be *taught* and received, *underſtood* and *interpreted* in a *manner* proper, and peculiar to *themſelves*, *in the Words, which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth.*

I. Under the *Firſt* Head I have endeavoured to ſhow the *difference* between *Divine* Knowledge and *Secular* Science: that we arrive not in the *ſame* manner at *both*: nor can we argue upon the *ſame* Principles about them: nor will our *Reaſoning* hold from *Human* Subjects to *Divine*: In *Human* Science we have *Simple*, *Direct*, and *Adequate* Ideas; upon theſe we can form *immediate* Conceptions; but in *Divine* Subjects we have no *Ideas* at all, nor can we form any *Conceptions* of them, but by *ſubſtituting* our ſenſible *Ideas*: our *Moral* Conceptions, and the *Operations* of our own Minds to expreſs ſomething *Correſpondent* in things of a *Spiritual* Nature.

That God is, we know by all the Arguments, which prove his *Exiſtence*: but *What* He Is, and *How* He Subſiſts we know not in any *Scientifical* manner, but only from ſuch faint *Reſemblance* and *Correſpondence*, as his *Creatures*, infinitely diſtant from *Him*, can any ways bear unto *Him*.

This *Reſemblance* is *Originaly* derived from God: He is the only *Prototype*: It is a *Similitude* of his own *impreſſing* upon our Thoughts and

and Conceptions: And tho' it may be too refined to say, *we see all Things in* God, yet we have no way to see God, but in his *Creatures*: and this way of Apprehending *Him* convinces us by all, that we can call *Powerful*, *Wise*, and *Good*, and *Perfect*, that *He* is *such* in an Incomprehensible manner; But to imagine, that these *Attributes* are in *Him*, as *they* are in *us*, or that *He* thinketh and knoweth, as *we* do, *we* may as well imagine, that *He exists*, and *acts* after the *manner* of *Men*.

For this Reason the *Things* of God cannot be *taught* in the *Way*, or in the *Language* of *Human* Science according to the *first* and proper *signification* of the *Words*; For tho' the *Words* be the *same*, yet *they* are *not* applied in their *strict* and *Literal*, but in a *secondary*, and *Analogical* sense, when we speak of the *Things* of God, and therefore *they are not taught*, and the *Apostle* speaks *not* of *them in the Words, which Man's Wisdom teacheth*.

This short Recapitulation may serve for the *First* Head, I proceeded in the next place to show,

II. *Positively* that the *Things of* God are to be *taught* and *received*, *understood* and *interpreted* in a *manner* proper and peculiar to *themselves*, or as the *Apostle* speaketh, *in the Words, which the Holy Ghost teacheth*.

The *Method* of which is here *prescribed*, *Comparing Spiritual Things with Spiritual*:

And the *Reason* of it is also *given*, *because they are Spiritualy discerned*.

Upon

Upon this *Head* I have endeavoured to ſhow in what manner the *Things* of GOD are to be taught and ſpoken of by *us*, from the Conſideration of the *manner* they are taught and ſpoken of in the *Scriptures*: The *Apoſtle* diſtinguiſheth very juſtly between the *Words*, *which Man's Wiſdom teacheth*, and the *Words*, *which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth*; the *Language* indeed is the *ſame* as to the *Letters*, and *Syllables*, and *Pronounciation*, but the *Words* are *differently* applied: In *Human* Science they are uſed in their *firſt* and proper ſignification to expreſs our *direct* and *ſimple Ideas*: and all thoſe *Notions* and *Conceptions* which riſe from the various *Combinations* of them; But in *Divine* Knowledge both our *Words* and *Conceptions* are *ſubſtituted* to expreſs the *Things* of GOD ſo far, as they are *Intelligible* by us: *Not* as they are in *themſelves*, for ſo *they* are *Inexpreſſible*, becauſe *Incomprehenſible*.

Even in *Natural* Religion, we muſt form our *Conceptions* of GOD after *this* manner: nor can we truly expreſs *Him*, but in the *Words*, *which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth*. Man's *Wiſdom* was loſt and bewildered upon this great Subject, and the *Words* of Men ſpake *falſely*, nor had we at this time, without a *Revelation*, been able to ſpeak more *worthily* of *Him*. For as we read in the Chapter before, [a] *After that in the Wiſdom of* GOD, *the World by Wiſdom knew not* GOD, *It pleaſed* GOD *by the Fooliſhneſs of Preaching to ſave them that believe*: That is, After the World, by the juſt Judgment of GOD upon their Blind-

[a] 1 Cor. I. 22.

neſs

neſs and Corruption, for their having ſo *ſoon* and ſo *Univerſaly* run into *Idolatry*, had long lain in Darkneſs and Error, it was the *Wiſdom* of God to make uſe of *plain* and *ſimple* Men in a *plain* and *unaffected* manner, to *preach Him* to the World, thereby convincing the vain *Diſputer* and the proud *Philoſopher*, that with all their *Wiſdom* they could not attain to the *Knowledge* of *Him.*

And becauſe all *Oppoſition* to the *Special* Articles of *Faith* by thoſe, who *admit* a *Revelation*, is made either by a *Strict* and *Literal*, or elſe by a *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Interpretation, and by arguing upon them, as if there was no *Difference* in the *Nature* of God and his *Creatures*, I propoſed as the *ground* of true *Interpretation* to conſider this *twofold Analogy*: The *Analogy* of *Language*, and the *Analogy* of *Faith*: The *Analogy* of *Language* anſwerable to the *Apoſtle*'s ſpeaking *in the Words, which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth*: The *Analogy* of *Faith* anſwerable to the Rule the *Apoſtle* here layeth down, *of Comparing Spiritual Things with Spiritual.*

The *Analogy* of *Language* is of great uſe to ſhow, that *what* is *revealed* of God is not to be *underſtood* in a *Groſs Literal* ſenſe on the one hand, nor in a meer *Figurative* ſenſe on the other, but in a *middle Way*, which gives us true Conceptions of God, ſo far, as we are able to apprehend *Him*, that is ſo far, as the whole Extent of created Being ſerves to expreſs any thing *Correſpondent* in the Divine Nature. Speaking therefore of God in the *Language* of the *Scriptures* under thoſe *Similitudes*, *Repreſentations*,

tations, *Types* and *Symbols*, which the *Holy Spirit* hath chosen out of the *whole* Compass of the *Creation*, is properly, according to this Divine *Analogy*, to *speak in the Words*, *which the Holy Ghost teacheth.*

I proceed now in the second place,

2. To the *Analogy* of *Faith* answering to that most excellent Rule, the *Apostle* goeth by, of *comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual.*

This is that *Analogy*, which St *Paul* requireth in his *Epistle* to the [a] *Romans*, and we translate the *Proportion of Faith*, not meaning thereby the *Degree* of it, either in the *Teacher* or the *Hearers*, but the *Agreement* of their *Doctrine* with the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*, and all *Parts* of the *Gospel* preached and delivered by our *Lord* and his *Apostles*; and this *Rule* doth *now* extend to the *New Testament* as well as the *Old.* For there is an Entire *Agreement* and *Consistency* of the *Scriptures* with *themselves* from *one* End to the *other*, from the *first dawning* of *Revelation*, as a [b] *Light*, *that shineth in a dark place*, till *it* [c] *shineth more and more unto a perfect day.* All the *Sacred* Writers, of whom the *Canon* of *both* Testaments is composed, maintain a perfect Harmony thro' all the parts of the Writings, the latter *Revelations* being still agreeable to, and so many gradual Superstructures upon the *former*; and tho' they lived in very *distant* Ages, and were of *different* Educations, and Callings: Some of them indeed of Royal Birth, and admirable Learning: others

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a Rom. XII. 6. b 2 Pet I. 19. c Prov. IV. 18.

Poor

Poor and Ignorant, plain and Illiterate Men, yet the *meaneſt* of them ſpeaking by the *ſame Spirit* expreſs the Divine Nature with the *ſame* Truth and Dignity, as the *Greateſt*, and far beyond the Wiſeſt, and moſt learned *Philoſophers*: There is no Difference, but ſometime a more Lofty and *Figurative* Style, which yet expreſſeth no more, than the *plaineſt* Words, it being only a more pompous *Form*, and Ornament of Speech.

If it be objected, that *Job* Himſelf and his *Friends* are not *immediately*, his three *Friends* eſpecialy, *not at all* inſpired in their Speeches, we anſwer that the *Book* it ſelf is an *inſpired Writing*, where the Holy *Penman* was directed to record all that paſſed in that Heavenly Converſation upon ſo ſad an Occaſion, as the *Hiſtorical* Books record alſo the *Actions*, and *Sayings* of *Perſons not inſpired*: and we reply further, that the *Sentiments* of *Job* and his *Friends*, particularly of *Elihu* the *fourth* Perſon in the *Dialogue* with Him, were not the *meer* Sentiments of *Natural* Reaſon and Religion only left entirely to themſelves, and wrought up by their own Diſquiſitions, but they were, tho' moſt agreable and evident to *Reaſon*, derived to them by *Tradition* and *Inſtruction*, and Originaly deduced from *Revelation*. *Job* himſelf ſeemeth to have had ſome ſpecial *Revelations*, [a] and he relateth what was *revealed* unto him in the *Viſions of the Night*, to which [b] *Elihu* alſo alludeth, when he entereth upon his Argument

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[a] Job IV. 12. [b] XXXIII. 15.

with him. To *Traditional* Knowledge *Job* refer-reth, when he declareth. [a] *Lo, mine Eye hath ſeen all this, mine Ear hath heard and underſtood it,* and *Eliphaz* the *Temanite* in his anſwer to him, [b] *With us are both the gray-headed and very aged Men, much elder than thy Father*: and [c] *Elihu,* when he ſaith, *I will fetch my Knowledge from afar.* An *Original* Revelation is plainly ſup-poſed in all thoſe places as ſo, where mention is made of *Creation,* and of *Angels,* and the *Re-ſurrection,* and the *World to come,* as *points* that could not be otherwiſe *at all,* or *not ſo fully* Known; and for *Inſtruction* in our *Moral* Duty which might be known by the *Light* of *Nature* alone, he recurreth to the *Revelation* of God. [d] *And unto Man He ſaid, Behold the Fear of the Lord, that is Wiſdom, and to depart from Evil is Underſtanding.* So then to put them all to-gether, the *Traditional, Special,* and *Perſonal* Revelation is expreſſed by *Job* in theſe few Words, [e] *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eye ſeeth thee.* And that *ſuch* a *Tradition* of an *Original* Revelation runs thro' the whole Book may be proved from its *Correſpondence* and *Agreement* with all *other* parts of the *Scripture.*

As the *Writings* of the *Old Teſtament* there-fore are entirely *conſiſtent* with *themſelves,* and run down in one perpetual Tenour of *Truth* and *Wiſdom,* from the *firſt* Writer to the *laſt,* the *New* beareth alſo a full and compleat *Cor-*

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[a] Job XIII. 1. [b] XV. 10. [c] XXXVI. 3. [d] XXVIII. 28. [e] XLII. 5.

reſpondence

reſpondence to the *Old*, by an exact *Agreement* of the *Events* with the *Prophecys*, and of the *Anti-types* with the *Types*, which prefigured them: the *Doctrine* alſo concerning the *One Living* and *True* GOD is the *ſame* in *Both*, only as our *Bleſſed* LORD in his *Perſon* and *Preaching fulfilled* the *Law* and the *Prophets*, the *Apoſtles* by their *Writings* ſtill *explained*, and *declared*, and *ſhewed* that *Completion* more diſtinctly in every point throughout the *Goſpels*, the *Acts*, and their *Epiſtles*.

In *Both* theſe, the *Old Teſtament* and the *New*, we meet with that *Perfection* which riſeth from *Symmetry* and *Proportion* in a juſt *Fitneſs*, and *Coincidence* of the *parts* with each other: In this conſiſt the Strength and Beauty of every Building, and in this *Analogy* do ſtand the *Church*, and the *Faith* of *Chriſt*, which, like us alſo, who believe, are [a] *built upon the Foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Jeſus Chriſt Himſelf being the Chief Corner Stone.*

I would only obſerve, that as this *Building* had been carrying on thro' *many* Ages by *different* Hands, without any outward *Model*, the *Agreement* and *Conſiſtency* of the ſeveral *Parts* can be aſcribed only to that one Omnipotent, and Omniſcient *Architect*, that *Bleſſed Spirit*, who in ſo *maſterly* and *admirable* a manner *conducted* and *finiſhed* the *whole* Deſign. The *Prophets* ſaw no further, than the *ſpecial* Revelations vouchſafed unto them: and the *Apoſtles* owed all their Knowledge in *Chriſt*, and of the

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[a] Epheſ. II. 20.

Myſterys of his Kingdom to the immediate Inſpiration of the *Holy Ghoſt*; they were moſt of them poor and illiterate Perſons, of a mean and ſimple Education: This the *Chief Prieſts* took Notice of in two of them, and [a] *perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant Men*, and the Obſervation was true, for ſo they were, and till they were endewed with Power from on high, [b] *they were dull, and ſlow of Heart to believe all, that the Prophets have ſpoken concerning* the *Sufferings*, the *Death*, and *Reſurrection* of our Lord, and for the great Article of the *Reſurrection*, they were ſo ignorant, even after our Lord was riſen, that [c] *as yet they knew not the Scriptures, that He muſt riſe again from the Dead.* This I mention to ſhow, that the *Holy Ghoſt*, who ſpake by the Prophets, did ſpeak by them alſo in one uniform *Analogy of the Faith* throughout the *whole* Body of the *Scriptures.*

In Order to our right underſtanding this *Analogy* of *Faith* we are to conſider, *What* points are truly and properly *Objects* of our *Faith*, and in *what* manner they are propoſed to our Belief; So that by obſerving *how*, upon *what* grounds, and in *what* ſenſe we aſſent to *ſome* Points, about which we have no Doubt, nor Difference, we may learn *how* to underſtand and aſſent to *thoſe* Propoſitions alſo concerning which Men have entertained very different Opinions.

The way therefore will be, Firſt to propoſe the *plainer* and more *unconteſted* Articles, and

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a Acts IV. 13. b Luke XXIV. 23.

then

then to interpret and underſtand the more *Myſterious* Points in a manner *agreeable* and *conſiſtent* with our Belief of the *other*; that ſo we may go on, as [a] *the Righteouſneſs of* God *is revealed, from Faith to Faith*, till having diſtinctly viewed the ſeveral parts by themſelves, we may at laſt behold the Beauty, Harmony, and Agreement of the whole together.

This Courſe then I ſhall hold, taking firſt a more *general*, and then a more *particular* view of the great Subject before us, and proceeding from the more *ſimple* and *unconteſted*, to the more *Myſterious* and *diſputed* Points.

1. In *general*, *Faith*, as it is the Subject of our preſent Diſcourſe is a firm *Aſſent* to the *Truth* of a *Propoſition* upon the *Teſtimony* and *Authority* of God: This taketh in *Natural* Religion as well as *Revealed* ſtrictly ſo called, and howſoever we have *Natural* Convictions of the *Being* and *Attributes* of God, yet when they are propoſed to us more clearly and perfectly in a *Revelation* from *Himſelf*, they do then become proper *Objects* of *Faith* under the *Diſtinction* and *Form* of *Revelation*. The God of *Abraham* the Living and true God was the God revealed to the Children of *Iſrael*, as He alone, in *whom* they ſhould believe, and *whom* they ſhould ſerve; Their *Natural* Notions were ſo far from teaching them the Divine *Unity* in this peculiar ſenſe, that there is *no* God, but *One*, that they would *have*, contrary to his expreſs Command, *other* Gods beſides *Him*, and *Revelation* it ſelf

[a] Rom. I. 17.

was not able for many Ages to root out the *Miſtakes* of their *Natural* Apprehenſion, how *obvious* ſoever to *Reaſon* it be, that there is none *other* God but *One*, and how *plain* ſoever by *Revelation*, that the Lord their God Is He. Thus the *ſame* Points may be conſidered, as *parts* of *Natural* and *Revealed* Religion, as the *ſame* Dutys are of *Natural* and *Divine* Obligation; and our *Natural* Belief is improved into *Divine* Faith, when the ſeveral *Articles* of *Natural* Religion are *revealed* to the World, and our *Aſſent* is required by the *Word* of God: and thus alſo in *that* part of *Natural* Religion, which we call *Moral* (however Mankind may be ſuppoſed capable of forming the ſeveral Branches of it by their own Reaſonings and Convictions alone) when the ſeveral Dutys of *Morality* are delivered and required by God *Himſelf*, then we are to look upon ourſelves under a *Divine*, as well as *Moral* Obligation to perform them, and ſo our *Works* become *part* of our *Faith* itſelf. This *Natural* or *Moral* is a more *general* and *tacit* Obligation: It is the very *Law* of our *Nature*, and as *ſuch* it ſprings *Originaly* from God *Himſelf*; But when *Morality* is enjoined by the Word of God, the *Obligation* to it becomes more *formal* and Expreſs, and it is then ſtrictly and properly *Divine*. As therefore *Moral* Dutys, when practiſed upon a *Principle* of *Faith*, become *Evangelical* Graces, in like manner the *Truths* of *Natural* Religion relating to God, when propoſed in the *Scriptures*, become *Articles* of *Faith*.

But

But beſides the *Truths* of *Natural* Religion concerning the *Being* and *Attributes* of God, and our *Duty* to *Him*, there are many *Truths* of ſtrict *Revelation*, which we could have no Knowledge or Apprehenſion of by any other means: Of this Kind are all thoſe *Truths* of the Divine Being, which are not included in *Natural* Religion, and I may add, that all *thoſe* Truths of *Natural* Religion itſelf may be conſidered, as of ſtrict *Revelation* ſo far, as they are taught and delivered in the *Scriptures* more *perfectly*, than ever they were by the meer ſtrength of *Reaſon* alone in the corrupt and darkened Eſtate it was in, ſince meer *Reaſon* in ſuch its weak Condition, tho' it neceſſarily *aſſenteth* to theſe *Truths* when *diſcovered*, was not able to make a full and perfect Diſcovery, void of all Miſtakes, and is therefore realy *indebted* to *Revelation* for them: However admitting the Diſtinction between *Natural* Religion and *Revealed*, we are then to conſider *thoſe* Truths which are diſcoverable by *Revelation* only; Theſe are what God hath been pleaſed to *reveal* concernin the *Divine* Nature, and the *Perſons* ſubſiſting in *it*, together with the whole Plan and Method of our *Redemption* by *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord.

Concerning theſe great and ſublime *Truths*, *what* we are to believe is plainly expreſſed, and in *what* particular manner we are to *underſtand* and *interpret* the Propoſitions is alſo plainly to be collected from that *Agreement* and *Conſiſtency*, which muſt neceſſarily be found, in all Points

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and *Articles* of Faith, from one End of the *Scriptures* to the other.

To proceed therefore as I proposed, to the *Analogy* of *Faith* in understanding and interpreting the *Scriptures*, the best and most *natural* Method will be *first* to see what is *revealed*, and declared concerning the *Divine* Nature in general, and *afterwards* what is more *specialy revealed* concerning this *Divine* Nature, and the *Transactions* of God with Mankind, and then the *last* must be interpreted according to the plain and evident Declarations concerning the *first*.

In the first place therefore, according to this rule, with reference to God and the great *Mysterys* of our *Faith* the *Unity* of the *Divine* Nature must be asserted, and at the same time the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of the *Persons* preserved, and therefore the *Unity* of *Essence* is to be maintained together with the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of the *Persons* against all who confound the *Distinction*, or deny the *Divinity*, whether they be *Arians*, *Socinians*, and *Sabellians*.

To this purpose I shall *first* consider the several *Revelations* concerning the *Unity* of *Essence*, and the *Divinity* as well as *Distinction* of the *Persons*, to shew, that the *Nature* is truly *One*, and the *Persons* realy *Distinct*. And then in the *second* place I shall proceed to argue according to these *Rules* of *Interpretation* upon them.

1. Concerning the *Divine* Nature or God-Head in general, the *Unity* is expressly revealed

ed in thoſe Celebrated Words of [a] *Moſes*, which are *afterwards* cited to the *ſame* Purpoſe by our [b] *Lord* Himſelf, and plainly alluded to, as we ſhall ſee, by [c] St *Paul*. *Hear, O Iſrael, the Lord our GOD is one Lord: Jehovah our GOD is One Jehovah.* In *Iſaiah*, [d] *thus ſaith the LORD the King of Iſrael, and his Redeemer the LORD of Hoſts: I am the Firſt, and I am the Laſt, and beſides Me there is no GOD, I know not any.* And again having aſſerted by way of challenge his Omnipotence and Omniſcience, he demands, [d] *Is there a GOD beſides Me?* and declareth, *yea there is no GOD, I know not any.* In the next [e] Chapter He avoweth: *I am the Lord, and there is none elſe, there is no GOD beſides me. That they may know from the riſing of the Sun and from the Weſt, that there is none beſides me; I am the Lord, and there is none elſe*: exactly anſwerable to what [f] *Moſes* had taught the Children of *Iſrael*, that the *Lord He is GOD there is none elſe beſides Him. The Lord He is GOD in Heaven above, and in Earth beneath, there is none elſe*; and accordingly, this Mighty Lord [g] declareth by his Prophet *Iſaiah. I am the Lord, that is my Name, and my Glory will I not give to another, nor my Praiſe to graven images.* And again, [h] *I will not give my Glory to another*: only it may poſſibly be objected that this *laſt* paſſage is not meant in the *ſame* ſenſe with the *firſt*. The *firſt* is evidently pointed againſt *all* the *Gods* and *Idols* of the *Heathen*, in the *laſt* GOD hath an Eye and regard to the

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a Deut. VI. 4. *b* Mark XII. 29. *c* 1 Cor. VIII. 4. *d* Iſai. XLIV. 6—8. *e* XLV. 5, 6, 18, 21, 22. *f* Deut. IV. 35—39. *g* Iſ. XLII. 8. *h* XLVIII. 11.

Hea-

Heathen Nations, leſt they ſhould triumph in the Ruin of his People, and therefore ſaith the Lord, *for my own ſake, even for my own ſake will I do it: For how ſhould my Name be polluted? and I will not give my Glory to another. This* I thought fit to remark, and if *this* refers not to the *Honour* given to *Idols* I do not inſiſt upon it; It may refer however to the *Honour*, that *would* be given by the *Heathen* to *their Idols*, as if (when they prevailed againſt the *Iſraelites*) *their Gods* had prevailed *againſt* the GOD of *Iſrael.* The other Declarations are exceeding plain, and very full to the Purpoſe.

Anſwerable to theſe ſolemn Aſſeverations of the Divine *Unity* by GOD *Himſelf* are the the Prayers and Confeſſions of his faithful Servants in acknowledgment of it. Thus *David* calleth upon *Him.* [a] *Among the Gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord, — All Nations ſhall Worſhip before Thee, O Lord, and ſhall glorify thy Name, For Thou art great and doeſt wondrous things; Thou art GOD alone.* And thus *Hezekiah* addreſſeth himſelf in his Prayer, [b] *Thou art the GOD, even Thou alone.* In like manner *Nehemiah* confeſſeth, [c] *Thou, even Thou art Lord alone.* This alſo was the Doctrine taught and delivered down from the Fathers to their Children, according to the humble Acknowledgment *David* offereth up to GOD for his peculiar Grace and Favour to him. [d] *Wherefore thou art great, O Lord, for there is none like Thee, neither is there*

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a Pſal. LXXXVI. 8, 9, 10. b Iſ. XXXVII. 16. c Neh. IX. 6. d 2 Sam. VII. 22.

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any GOD beſide Thee, according to all that we have heard with our Ears.

Theſe Texts are abundantly ſufficient for the *Unity* of GOD-Head, and conſequently for the *Appropriation* of the Divine *Attributes* and *Honour*, which are as conſtantly *applied* to this *One* GOD, and *no other*, as the *Unity* it ſelf is *aſſerted*, that as the *Pſalmiſt* expreſſeth it, [a] *Men may know, that Thou, whoſe Name alone is Jehovah, art the moſt High over all the Earth.*

2. Under this *Revelation* of the One GOD it is particularly *revealed*, that in this One GOD-Head there are Eternaly ſubſiſting the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, whom by reaſon of their *Relation* and diſtinct *Acts* and *Offices*, we call *Three Perſons*, and from that Number the *Trinity*: which *Three Perſons*, or ever Bleſſed *Trinity* is the *One* GOD of us *Chriſtians*, declared in the *Old*, but more expreſsly revealed in the *New Teſtament*, where we have the *Unity* of the GOD-Head, and this *Trinity* of *Perſons* plainly and poſitively aſſerted: That is, the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt* are aſſerted to be *Diſtinct* by *Relation* and *Office*, and but *One* in *Eſſence*, of the *ſame* Majeſty and Power, Co-eternal and Co-equal.

They, who oppoſe this *Doctrine*, either *deny* or *confound* the Diſtinction between *Perſon* and *Eſſence*, and this either by making the *whole Deity* a *Perſon*, or by allowing no *Perſon*, but *that* of the *Father* in the GOD-Head: thereby denying the *Divinity*, however they may admit

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[a] Pſal. LXXXIII. 18.

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the *Personality* of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*.

Before we enter upon the special Proofs of the *Trinity* from the *Scriptures*, it may not be improper in Answer to these Pretences, to shew,

1. *First*, That *Person* and *Essence* are realy *distinct* in *themselves*, as well as in our *Conceptions* of them:

2. *Secondly*, That the *Scriptures* speak of God according to that *Distinction* sometimes *Essentialy*, and sometimes *Personaly*, as the Divine *Attributes* are represented in *general*, and the Divine *Oeconomy* and *Transactions* with Mankind are declared in *particular*.

1. *Person* and *Essence* are realy *distinct*: That is in all *Beings*, whether *Created*, or *Uncreated* to which the Term *Person* is applied, there is a manifest *Distinction* between the *Essence* and *Personality* of *those* Beings. *Angels* are considered *one* way in their *Essence*, as pure immaterial Spirits, endewed with *Understanding* and *Will*: and *another* way in their *Persons*, as sustaining such particular *Characters*, and performing such special *Offices*. *Angels* are not *Persons* by their *Essence*, tho' Personality be applied to none, but intelligent Agents, however not by *that* alone, for by *that* alone they cannot be distinguished from each other, and must therefore be discriminated and named from some peculiar *Acts* and *Offices*, which *each* performeth for *Himself*, and maketh it his proper *Act*. Now these are such, as are more *Common*, and *General*, as Praising and Adoring

doring their Creator, or more *particular*, as executing any *special* Charge and Command, which *He* giveth them. Thus *Michael* the [a] Commander of his Hosts and the [b] *Prince of his People Israel* is from his *Name* and *Office* that *particular Person*: And *Gabriel*, who [c] *flyeth upon his Messages*, and expoundeth the *Visions*, is therefore both by his *Name* and *Office* a particular *Person* also: The [d] *Angel* that appeared to the *Shepherds*, is likewise a *Person* in the Discharge of his *Evangelical Office*, and the same *Angel* with the [e] *Multitude of the Heavenly Host* are so many several *Persons* joyning in the more Common *Act* of Praising God, and saying, *Glory be to GOD in the Highest, &c.*

The same may be said of the *Angels*, who appeared to the *Patriarchs* and the People of *Israel*, recorded in the *Old* Testament, and the other *Angels* mentioned in the *New*, especialy in the *Revelation*: From all these Instances it is plain, that in *Angels* the *Essence* is *One* thing, the *Personality another*. Their *Essence* is the *same*, and by that there is no *Distinction* of them from one another: Their *Offices* and *Acts* are *Personal*, and from thence they are properly *denominated* and *distinguished*:

It is *so* likewise among *Men*: The *Essence* is the *same*, the *Personality* riseth from the peculiar *Agency* of every Man in the *Relation* wherein he standeth, whereby his *Action* is peculiarly his *own*.

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a Rev. XII. 7. *b* Dan. X. 13, 21. XII. 1. *c* IX. 21. VIII. 16. Luke I. 11, 19, 26. *d* Luke II. 9. *e* v. 13.

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In *Uncreated* Being also the *Essence* is the *same*, and the *Persons* are *severaly* distinguished, and denominated from their respective *Acts*, *Office* and *Relation*: But whereas in *Created* Beings the same *General Essence* is parted and divided to all of the *same Kind*, and so becometh *Specifical*, in *Uncreated* Being, as the *Essence* is also the *same*, it is *impossible* to be *parted* into several *Portions*, so as to constitute *Individuals* like *Angels*, or *Men*, for the *Divine Being* admitteth not of any *Specifical* Distribution, because it is *necessarily One*, and therefore out of the *reach* and *possibility* of *Multiplication* or *Division*: and being thus *necessarily indivisible*, we cannot say, that the *Persons* are *Sharers* of any *Part*, where *Each* is *entirely* possessed of the *Whole*. In *Men* and *Angels*, tho' their *Common* Nature and *Essence* is the *same*, yet the *Substance* is multiplied with the several *Individuals*; but in the GOD-Head, the *Eternal Three*, the *Father*, *the Son* and the *Holy Ghost* have *One undivided Substance*, from whence is derived the *Unity* of the GOD-Head, and a *different* manner of *Subsisting* and *Acting* according to their several *Relation* and *Office*, from whence is derived the *Plurality* of *Persons*.*

* This cannot be better expressed than in the Words of that clear and most *judicious* Writer the Excellent Mr *Hooker*, who considereth the Constitution and Distinction of the Persons in the same Substance or Essence as formed by their several Propertys or Difference of Subsisting: to which if we add the peculiar Acts and Operations of each, the Distinction is still more evident. These indeed are only Consequents of that first and Fundamental Discrimination of one from the other by the several Propertys. The Distinction is Eternal: The several Offices and Operations

By a *Person* then in the GOD-Head we do not understand the *Divine Essence* absolutely considered, nor yet a *meer Name* and *Quality*, but a true and real *Subsistence* in the *same Essence*, distinguished by *such Acts* and *Relations* as, among us, are diverse from the *Essence*, and *yet* form the *Persons* of Men: and although we do not read in the *Scriptures*, that there are *Three Persons*, yet we plainly read, that GOD *hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, who is the* [a] *Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image or*

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perations are discovered in the Course of the Divine Dispensations in the Creation and Redemption of the World.

"The Lord our God is but one God. In which Indivisible "Unity notwithstanding we adore the Father, as being altoge- "ther of himself; we glorify that consubstantial Word, which is "the Son; we bless and magnify that Co-essential Spirit eter- "nally proceeding from both, which is the Holy Ghost. Seeing "therefore the Father is of none, the Son is of the Father, and "the Spirit is of both, they are by these their several Propertys "really distinguishable from each other. For the Substance of "God, with this property *to be of none*, doth make the Person of "the Father; the very self-same Substance in number, with this "Property *to be of the Father*, maketh the Person of the Son; the "same Substance having added unto it the Property of *proceeding* "*from the other two* maketh the Person of the Holy Ghost. So that "in every Person there is implied both the Substance of God, "which is one; and also that Property which causeth the same "Person really and truly to differ from the other two. Every "Person hath his own Subsistence, which no other besides hath, "although there be others besides of the same Substance: Eccl. Pol. Book V. 51. pag. 259. MDCCV.

I will only add, concerning the Father, that *His being of none* maketh Him the First Person: *The Son being of Him* maketh Him the Father. Thus much according to the State now recited, we may most surely and safely collect from the Revelation it self; but in *what* manner, *How* the Son is the Begotten of the Father, and *How* the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and the Son is utterly incomprehensible, and here we rest our Faith upon the Declaration of the Scriptures, and the Veracity of GOD.

[a] Hebr. I. 3.

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Character of his Perſon: not of his *Subſtance* alone, but peculiarly of his *Perſonal Subſiſtence*, for ſo the Word here uſed *Hypoſtaſis* ſignifieth, and He is the *Son not* of the *Deity* or *Divine Eſſence* at large, for *That* neither *begetteth*, *nor is begotten*, but of the *Father* in that *Eſſence*, who *begetteth* the *Son* alſo in the *ſame*. So that *Perſon* is here taken not for the *Face* or *Countenance*, or *Superficial Appearance*, but for the very *Nature* and *Eſſence* of the *Father communicated* to, and *impreſſed* in the moſt complete and diſtinct *Character* upon the *Son*: Even as among *Men* the *Son* is truly the *Expreſs Image* of his *Father*, with his *Father's whole Nature* and *Eſſence* derived unto him, and ſtamped, like a perfect *ſignature* upon him.

Perſon and *Eſſence* being thus diſtinct in *themſelves*, as well as in our *Conceptions* of *them*, the *Scriptures*

Secondly, Do ſpeak of God according to that *Diſtinction*, ſometimes *Eſſentialy*, and ſometimes *Perſonaly*, as the *Divine Attributes* are repreſented in *general*, and the *Divine Oeconomy* and *Tranſactions* with Mankind in *particular*: *Eſſentialy* with reſpect to the *Unity*: *Perſonaly* with reſpect to the *Relation*, *Name* and *Actions* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, whereby they are *ſo* diſtinguiſhed that, tho' the *Eſſence* be the *ſame*, *Each* hath his proper *Perſonality*, and *One* of theſe cannot be the *Other*.

Thus the *Father*, who *begetteth*, is not the *Son*, who is *begotten*: the *Father*, who *ſendeth*, is not the *Son*, who is *ſent*, nor the *other* way is the

Son

Son the *Father*. [a] *For* GOD *so loved the World, that He gave his only Begotten Son, and sent Him into the World.* Again, the *Holy Ghost*, who *proceedeth* from the *Father*, and the *Son*, and is sent by the *Father* and the *Son*, is not the *Father* nor the *Son*, from *whom* He *proceedeth*, and by *whom* He is *sent*; nor the *other* way is the *Father* and *Son* the *Holy Ghost*. This *Distinction* in the *Mission* and *Proceeding* of the *Third* from the *First* and the *Second* is evident, where our *Saviour* speaketh of the [b] *Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom*, saith He, *the Father will send in my Name*; — there is the *Mission* from the *Father*, and in the next Chapter, [c] *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father*, --- there is the *Mission* from the *Father*, and the *Son*: --- [c] *even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father*: --- there is his *Procession* from the *first* Person, and the next Chapter declareth his *Procession* from the *second* also, and that *not* separately, *but* jointly from *Both* together. [d] *Howbeit when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all Truth --- He shall not speak of Himself --- He shall* [d] *glorifie me, for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things, that the Father hath, are mine, therefore said I, He shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you*: Here the *Holy Ghost* is equaly *referred* to, and *proceedeth* from the *Father* and the *Son*, and what *He receiveth* of the *Son*, *He receiveth* of the *Father* also. So then in these passages the *Order* and *Oeconomy* of the *Divine* Persons is set down:

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a John III. 16, 17. *b* XIV. 26. *c* XV. 26. XVI. 13. *d* 14, 15.

The *Father* as the fountain, is neither *begotten*, nor *Proceedeth* from, nor is *ſent* by *Any*. The *Son* is *begotten* of, and *ſent* by, and *receiveth* from the *Father*: the *Holy Ghoſt* is *ſent* by, and *receiveth* of, and *proceedeth* from *Both*: the *Holy Ghoſt* therefore is the *Spirit* both of the *Father*, and the *Son*: [a] *GOD hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying ABBA, Father.* According to our Lord's moſt ſolemn Aſſertion in the tenth of St *John*, often mentioned before, and ſtill to be mentioned again, the *Father* and the *Son* are [b] *One*; and the *Spirit* alſo is neceſſarily *One* with *thoſe*, whoſe *Spirit* He is. For if the *Spirit* of Man, who is compoſed alſo of *Body*, be, during this *united* State, *one* with the *Man*, and upon its *Reunion* will be *one* with *him* again, much more the *Spirit* of the *Father* and the *Son* being the ſame *Spirit*, muſt neceſſarily be *One* with the *Father* and the *Son*, *diſtinct* in *Perſon*, in *Eſſence* the *ſame*, which is juſt the *Reverſe* of the *Eſſence* and *Perſonality* of *Man*, where the *Eſſence* is *Diſtinct*, as conſiſting of *Body*, *Soul*, and *Spirit*, and the *Perſon one* and the *ſame*: from whence we may underſtand that however *Analogical* Conceptions will help us to ſuch *Apprehenſions* of the Divine Being, as our preſent Facultys are capable of, that there is no arguing in a *Strict Literal* manner from *Human* Perſonality to *Divine*.

The Diſtinction is equaly clear in the *Old Teſtament*, as we now can read it by the Light of the *New*, and the *Office* of the *Holy Ghoſt* is alſo the

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a Gal. IV. 6. b John X. 30.

ſame

ſame, particularly *that*, which St *Peter* witneſſeth unto, [a] *For the Prophecy came not* [ever] *in old time by the Will of Man, but Holy Men of GOD ſpake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt.*

This Diſtinction will ſtill be more Evident as we go along to conſider the *ſpecial Revelation* of the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt* given us in the *Scripture*.

1. Not to inſiſt on theſe Paſſages of the *Old Teſtament*, which are now controverted, but ſtill evident enough according to the Expoſition of the *Ancient Jews*, I ſhall obſerve, that the God ſpoken of, and declared in the *Scriptures*, hath from the *Creation* exhibited *Himſelf* as acting in a Divine *Oeconomy*, and manifeſting a *Co-operation* of *Perſons* in the firſt Production of all things, and in all his Diſpenſations, and Tranſactions with Mankind ever ſince.

This is Originaly founded on the *firſt* Chapter of [b] *Geneſis*, where we diſcern the *Co-operation* of certain *Perſons* concurring in the *Creation* of the World: The *Father* willing, and Commanding: The *Son*, [c] *by whom alſo He made the Worlds*, the mighty Efficient Word, which out of *Nothing* called the whole *Creation*, and commanded *Light* out of *Darkneſs*, and *Order* to riſe up from *Confuſion*: The *Holy Spirit of* God [d] *moving* or hovering *upon the face of the Waters*: And upon the *ſixth* Day, when God is introduced ſaying, [e] *let us make Man in our Image, after our Likeneſs*, the words have not *anciently*

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a 2 Pet. I. 21. *b* Gen. I. *c* Hebr. I. 2. *d* Gen. I. 2 *e* v. 26.

been interpreted as a *Royal* Form of Speech, but in the way of *Advice* and *Consultation*, as spoken by the *Father* to the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*.

There are in all the *Scriptures*, so far as I can recollect, but *five* Instances besides, that I can think any thing to the Purpose, of a *singular* Person speaking in the *first* Person in the *Plural* Number. The *first* is in the third of *Genesis*, [a] *And the Lord* God *said, Behold the Man is become as one of us*--- Which Speech, however understood, is addressed to *Persons* in *Equality* with *Himself*, and therefore not to *Angels*, nor to any *Creature*, for they are not like unto God, nor to any whom He calleth *One of Us*, and so this Text is another Proof of a *Trinity*, at least of a *Plurality* of *Persons* in the *GOD-Head*. The *second* is in the *Eleventh* Chapter, where upon that Presumptuous Attempt of *Building a City and Tower, whose Top might reach to Heaven*, Men seemed to *reach* at *Heaven itself* with *Folly* equal to their *Pride*, God is represented as coming down to confound their Language, and He speaketh in the *Plural* Number, *Go to, let us go down and there confound their Language*. This again is not a *Solitary* Speech: it is directed to some *Persons* or other, but whether to the other *Persons* in the *Trinity*, or to *Angels* only, doth not so evidently appear as in the first Instance, because *Angels*, as in other Cases they are *Ministers* of God's *Judgments*, in this also might be employed to confound the Language of Men: However the Words are directed to some *Per-*

[a] Gen. III. 22.

sons,

sons, whom He calleth upon, for the Expression in the Original is the *same*, which the Children of Men used to one another, [a] *Go to, let us make Brick*, [b] *Go to, let us build*, say they. [c] *Go to, let us go down*, saith the Lord. If this be spoken to the *same* with the First, it is another Proof of a *Plurality* of *Persons* in the *GOD-Head*: If to *Angels*, it is a Proof, that the *Plural* Number tho' *used by*, is not *used of* a *Singular* Person only. The *third* and *fourth* are in the first Book of *Kings*, and the second Book of *Chronicles*, where when *Ahab* answereth *Jehoshaphat*, [d] *there is one Man by whom we may enquire*, he manifestly includeth *Jehoshaphat*, as *Jehoshaphat* had before included him, when he asked him: [e] *Is there not here a Prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire of Him?* For when *Ahab* speaketh of Himself alone, he addeth, *but I hate him.* So when *Ahab* asketh *Micaiah*, [f] *Shall we go up to Ramoth Gilead to Battel*, he speaketh in the *Person* of *Jehoshaphat*, as well as his *Own*: For when he speaketh in his *own* Person, it is in the *singular* Number. [g] *How many times shall I adjure thee?* The fifth we meet with in the Answer which *Artaxerxes* who was *Smerdis* the *Magian* an *Impostor* and *Usurper* of the Throne from *Cambyses*, called here *Ahasuerus*, sent unto *Rehum* and his *Fellows*. [h] *The Letter which ye sent unto us, hath been read plainly before me*: Here the King speaketh both in the *Singular*, and the

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a Gen. XI. 3. *b* v. 4. *c* v. 7. *d* 1 Kings XXII. 8. *e* v. 7. *f* v. 15. *g* v. 16. See 2 Chron. XVIII. 5, 6, 7, 14, 15. *h* Ezra IV. 18.

Plural Number: In the *Plural* he may poſſibly include his *Council*, in the *Singular* he goes on in his own Perſon and commandeth the Work to ceaſe. However ſuppoſing, he ſpeaketh of Himſelf in the *Plural*: It is but *one* Inſtance and the *moſt Modern* in the *Bible*. The ſtyle, we ſee is preſently turned, and he *enacteth*, and *decreeth* in the *Singular* Number, but if this Style in the *Plural* was uſual, we might expect to meet with it, if any where, in the *Edicts* and *Laws* of Princes, eſpecialy in the *Pompous* Titles of the *Eaſtern* Kings, and yet the Contrary appeareth. For *Ancient* to this [a] *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Decrees run in the *Singular* Number, ſo do thoſe of [b] *Cyrus*, and of [c] *Darius* the *Mede*, or *Cyaxares* the *ſecond*, and *later* than this, the *Decrees* of [d] *Darius Hyſtaſpes*, and [e] *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, called *Ahaſuerus* in the Book of *Eſther*: the great Patron and Favourer of the *Jews*. Theſe are *Authoritys* ſufficient to overthrow ſo ill grounded a Preſumption of the *Royal Style* in the *Edicts* and *Decrees* of *Kings*.

And yet ſo low do the Exceptions of *Heretical* Objectors run, that they bring Inſtances of *ſingle* Perſons ſpeaking in the *Plural* Number, where it is manifeſt, that they do ſpeak in the Name of *others* as well as their *own*: Thus to confront the Text in *Geneſis Bildad* the *Shubite* is produced as a *Monarch* ſpeaking in the *Royal* Style. [f] *How long will it be e're ye make*

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a Dan. III. 29. IV. 1, 2, &c. *b* Ezra I. 1, 2. *c* Dan. VI. 26. *d* Ezra VI. 8, &c. *e* VII. 21. See Eſther VIII. 7. *f* Job XVIII. 2.

an

an End of words? mark and afterwards we will speak. But however *Bildad* might be a *Prince* or a *Potentate*, it is not common to use the *Royal* Style in *private* Conference and Conversation, and here he manifestly includeth either *Elihu*, or the *others* with Himself. *Mark and we will speak,* [a] *Wherefore are we counted as Beasts?* Had he spoken thus *Royaly* of Himself alone, he would have said, wherefore are *we* counted as *a Beast*: The *Royal* Style it self, however it setteth forth in the *Plural*, still in the *Oblique* Cases maketh out the *singularity* of the Person: as to instance in *one* for a *thousand*, 'Tis the style of our Kings *Witness our Self*, and not *our selves.*

But further, when in another place he saith, [b] *We are of yesterday, and know nothing*, I suppose, he speaketh not as a *King* of Himself alone, but doth rather make an humble and just Acknowledgment of Human Ignorance, at least of his own, and his Friends about him. *Eliphaz*, who first answered *Job*, was, we may suppose, a *King* also, but he spoke in the *Name* of his Friends as well as his *own*, when he said, [c] *If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved?* and in the *place*, I cited before for *Traditional* Religion, the Form is Comprehensive of more Persons, than the Speaker: [d] *What knowest thou, that we know not? what understandest thou, which is not in us?* These Objections are poor indeed, and these Instances are *more properly*, because *most truly* urged on our side of the

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a Job XVIII. 3. b VIII. 9. c IV. 2. d XV. 9.

Question:

Question: The *Plural* Form manifestly implieth a *Plurality* of *Persons*, and the *Old Testament* affordeth not the shadow of an Authority for their Interpretations.

In the *New Testament*, I find one Passage alleged for the *Royal* Style, and that indeed is from our *Saviour* Himself in his Conference with *Nicodemus*, where He hath these Words: [a] *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that, we do know, and testifie that, we have seen, and ye receive not our Witness*: If our Lord speaketh here as a *King*, the Style should run, *We say unto thee*: That is the *grand Magisterial* Way; but He speaketh indifferently in *both* Numbers: [b] *If I have told you Earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of Heavenly things?* Tho' *He*, and *Nicodemus* only were together, yet *He* speaketh, as if others had elsewhre spoken the same, and to *Nicodemus*, as if *more* were present, or these things had been spoken to *more* than *Nicodemus* only. With *Nicodemus* He includeth the *Jews*, to whom these things had been spoken, and with Himself He includeth at least the *Baptist*. Concerning whom *He* telleth the *Jews* very appositely to what he doth here discourse with *Nicodemus*, [c] *There is another that beareth Witness of me: ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the Truth.* He *testified* what he had *seen*, and *they received not his Witness.* Appositely to this again in the same Form of Speech our Blessed Lord discourseth with the Woman of *Samaria*, there speaking of the *Jews*

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a John III. 11. b v. 12. c V. 32, 33.

as

as well as Himself, as He was one of that *People.* [a] *Ye Worship, ye know not what; we know what we Worship; for Salvation is of the Jews.* When He speaketh of Himself alone, *Jesus* saith unto her, [b] *I that speak unto thee am* [*he*] that is *Messias, which is called Christ.* If it be still insisted upon, that our *Saviour* speaketh to *Nicodemus* as a *singular* Person, we must remember, that in all other Instances He declined the *Title, Pomp* and *Majesty* of an *Earthly King*; and on the other side we may allege, that He speaketh not in his *own* Name *alone*, but in the *Name* of the *Father* and the *Holy Spirit* also. To what he saith, *Ye receive not our Witness*, we may apply those wotds of his to the *Jews*, [c] *The Father Himself, which hath sent me, hath born witness of me.* As for Testimony so for Judgment likewise, [d] He telleth them: *Yet if I judge my Judgment is true, for I am not alone, but I, and the Father that sent me.* I will not bring that place, where he tells his Disciples, [e] *Ye shall leave me alone, yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me*; which yet is full and clear, when we consider that other place, [f] *I and my Father are One.* The *Apostles* also use the same Forms of Speech, and yet it is not pretended, that they were *Kings.* St *Paul* speaketh thus in [g] his own and *Barnabas*'s Name, and in the Name of those, whom he joyneth with Himself in the Head of his *Epistles*, or of all the [h] *Apostles.* So doth St *Peter*; and so St *John* in words very apposite to

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a John IV. 22. *b* v. 26. *c* V. 37. *d* VIII. 16. *e* XVI. 32. *f* X. 30. *g* 1 Cor. IX. 5, 6. *h* IV. 9, 10.

those

thoſe he recordeth of our Lord in his Goſpel. [a] *That which was from the Beginning, which we have heard, which we have ſeen with our Eyes, which we have looked upon, and our Hands have handled of the Word of Life, That which we have ſeen and heard, declare we unto you. More* needeth not be ſaid; this is ſufficient, if any thing can be ſo, to take away the very pooreſt Pretence to *Cavilling*; and *leſs* could not be ſaid, when the *Adverſarys* of the Faith ſhall think the Inſtance of of *Bildad* the *Shuhite* and our Lord's Diſcourſe to *Nicodemus* enough to ſhew, That God ſpake after the *Manner* of *Kings*, when He ſaid, *Let us make Man in our own Image* &c. *Moſes*, who was *directed* by God, that ſaid it, *borrowed* not his *Phraſe* from the *Style* of *Kings* in his Time. Whether *Kings* afterwards, when they *affected Divinity*, did not rather *borrow* this *Form* from Him is a *Problem* for the *Curious*, and an *Argument* that the *Form* is not *Human*, but *Divine*.

This Form of Speech therefore as uſed in the firſt of *Geneſis* infers a *Plurality* of *Perſons*: the *Work* to be done implieth the *Divinity*, and the *Pattern* propoſed, the *Unity* of *Eſſence*: To create is proper to the Divinity alone, and the *Image* being *one*, ſhews the *Eſſence* to be *one* likewiſe. If God ſpake then unto *Angels*, that were to make them Workers, and *Creators* together with Himſelf: if to *them* or to any *Creatures* of higher Rank and Excellency, that were to create Man in *their* Image, and after *their* Likeneſs, as well, as his *own*; but Man was created *only*

[a] 1 Ep. I. 1, 3.

in

in the *Image* of God, and after his Likeneſs, and therefore as a *Plurality* of Perſons is expreſſed, the *Unity* of *Eſſence* is evidently concluded.

2. After the *Creation*, both during the ſhort Continuance of Man in *Innocence*, and all along after the *Fall*, The Word the Son is underſtood to be the *Perſon* who appeared to *Adam* and his Poſterity before the Flood, and to the *Patriarchs* after: whoſe Preſence was ſignified by the Appearance of *Angels*, among whom was One of Sovereign Dignity, who for that Reaſon is eminently ſo called: This was the *Angel*, which appeared to *Moſes* [a] in *Horeb*, and afterwards came down upon [b] *Mount Sinai*, two different ſummits riſing from the ſame Foundation; In *Horeb* God called to *Moſes* out of the burning Buſh, and from *Sinai*, which *Moſes* alſo calleth *Horeb*, [c] He delivered the *Law* unto the Children of *Iſrael*: The ſame *Angel* whom *Moſes* in the Books of [c] *Exodus* and [c] *Deuteronomy* calleth by the Name of God, and the Lord, St *Stephen* alſo in the [d] *Acts* calleth God and the Lord. *For there appeared to him an Angel of the Lord, and the Voice of the Lord came unto him, ſaying, I am the GOD of thy Fathers*, This was in the *Wilderneſs* of Mount *Sinai*. And when the Lord deſcended afterwards upon Mount *Sinai* and gave the *Law*, ſaying, *I am the Lord thy GOD*, tho' *Moſes* maketh no mention then of an *Angel*, yet St *Stephen* in his Speech before the *Coun-*

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a Exod. III. 2, 4, 6. *b* XIX, XX. *c* Deut. V. 2. *d* Acts VII. 30, 32, 33.

cil

cil upbraideth that present Generation, and possibly their Fathers also, [a] *who have received the Law by the disposition of Angels, and have not kept it*, referring doubtless to the *Schechinah* which always attended the *Divine* Presence. And where the *Person speaking* as well as *appearing* is more eminently called the *Angel*, no *less* than the *Eternal Son*, even the Lord our GOD Himself is there to be understood. This is evident by comparing the several Passages which record these Appearances in the Books of the *Old* Testament alone, but still more evidently, as they are applied and explained in the *New*. This is He, who *spake unto* [b] *Moses face to face, as a Man speaketh to his Friend*; the *same*, who appeared to [c] *Joshua*, stiling Himself the *Captain of the Lord's Host*, before whom *Joshua fell upon his face, and did worship, and said unto Him, what saith my Lord unto his servant? And the Captain of the Lord's Host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy. This* is the *same*, of whom *Isaiah* speaketh, when he relateth, [d] *In the Year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a Throne, high, and lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple. Above it stood the Seraphims — and one cried unto another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole Earth is full of his Glory.* For according to St *John* reciting what the Lord commanded afterwards concerning the *Jews*, [e] *These*

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a Acts VII. 53. b Exod XXXIII. 11. c Josh. V. 14, 15.
d Is. VI. 1, 2, 3. e John XII. 41.

things

things said Esaias when he saw his Glory, and spake of Him. This is the Lord their GOD whom they provoked and tempted in the Wilderness, as it is Historicaly related by [a] *Moses*, [b] recorded in the *Psalms*, and applied by St *Paul* [c] unto *Christ*, How oft *did they provoke Him in the Wilderness, and grieved Him in the Desert*, Now *these things* the *Apostle* telleth us *were our Examples, Let not us* therefore *tempt Christ as some of them also tempted*; and in the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews* the *Apostle* applieth the Passage recorded in the Book of *Numbers*, and the *Psalms* most expresly to our Lord and Saviour. For of *Christ* he is speaking, when he saith, *To day, if ye will hear his Voice. He* it is, who *resteth from his Works the seventh day. He* it is, *Who sware in his Wrath, they shall not enter into his Rest.* He it is, to whom the *Father* speaketh in the *Psalms*, as is testified by the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*: *Thy Throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever, a Sceptre of Righteousness is the Sceptre of thy Kingdom. Thou Lord in the Beginning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth.* And *unto which of the Angels*, but unto *Christ* alone, both the *Lord*, and the *Son* of *David, said He at any time, Sit thou on my Right hand, until I make thine Enemys thy Footstool. I am the first, and I am the last*, saith the Lord in [d] *Isaiah*: *I am the first, and I am the last*, saith *Christ* in the *Revelation.*

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a Exod. XVI, XVII, XXXII. Numb. XI, XIV, XVI, XX, XXI, XXV, XXVI. *b* Psal. LXXVIII, CVI, XCV, CX. *c* 1. Cor. X. Hebr. III, IV, I. *d* Isai. XLI, XLIV. Rev. I. 17. XXII. 13.

The

3. The *Holy Ghoſt* alſo is diſtinguiſhed in the *Old* Teſtament, not only as He is called the *Spirit* of GOD, but as He is ſet forth and ſpoken of as a *ſeveral Perſon*. Many Inſtances are not to be produced, but thoſe, we meet with, are exceedingly clear and ſtrong. He is the *Spirit of* GOD, [a] *which moved upon the Face of the Waters*, even as a Bird hovereth and broodeth over her Eggs, an Expreſſion this ſuitable to the Form, He did afterwards aſſume, when He [b] *deſcended like a Dove*: And accordingly *Elihu*, who doubtleſs was acquainted with the true Hiſtory of the Creation, aſcribeth the Creation of Man unto Him, as He is the *Spirit of the Lord* GOD, *who* [c] *formed Man from the Ground, and breathed into his Noſtrils the Breath of Life*; See how conformable his Words are to the Hiſtory of *Moſes*: [d] *The Spirit of* GOD *hath made me, and the Breath of the Almighty hath given me Life.* I do not ſuppoſe, that *Elihu* had ſeen the Hiſtory of *Moſes*, but that there was a true account handed down in the Sacred Line, and among the Worſhippers of the true GOD: We find the *Spirit* ſpoken of again as a diſtinct *Perſon* from the *Father* and the *Son* in the ſixth Chapter of *Iſaiah*, [e] *And I heard the voice of the Lord, ſaying, whom ſhall I ſend, and who will go for us*, that is, *from* and *for* the *Father*, and the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*; *Then ſaid I, Here am I, ſend me*: The following Words are cited by our Lord Himſelf, and referred to in all the *Evangeliſts*,

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a Gen. I. 2. *b* Mat. III. 16. *c* Gen. II. 7. *d* Job XXXIII. 4. *e* Iſ. VI. 8.

and

and by St *Paul* in his *Epiſtle* to the [a]*Romans*, but the direct and fulleſt application of them to the *Holy Spirit* is made by the ſame *Apoſtle* in his Sermon to the *Jews*, when he firſt came a Priſoner to *Rome*, [b]*Well ſpake the Holy Ghoſt by Eſaias the Prophet unto our Fathers, ſaying, Go unto this People and ſay*, &c. In the Book of [c]*Exodus* we read, that when *Moſes went in before the Lord to ſpeak with Him, he took the Vail off until he came out*; and from St *Paul* we learn, that *the Lord is that Spirit*, in whoſe Preſence *Moſes* took off the Vail: and the ſame Spirit, the ſame Lord St *Paul* calleth alſo the *Spirit of* the Lord. [d]*Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty.* In this diſtinct ſenſe likewiſe the Words are to be underſtood in the fifty firſt *Pſalm*, where *David* prayeth unto God, [e]*Caſt me not away from thy Preſence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Reſtore unto me the Joy of thy Salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit.* Anſwerable to this is that Acknowledgment of God's Omnipreſence, [f]*Whither ſhall I go then from thy Spirit, or whither ſhall I flee from thy Preſence?* This is that *Spirit*, for diſobeying of whom St *Stephen* upbraideth the *Jews*, [g]*Ye do always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt, as your Fathers did, ſo do ye.* And this is He alſo, *who ſpake by the Prophets*, according to the Teſtimony of St *Peter*, *That Holy Men of* God *ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt.*

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a Rom. XI. 8. *b* Acts XXVIII. 25. *c* Exod. XXXIV. 34. *d* 2 Cor. III. 17. *e* Pſal. LI, 11, 12. *f* CXXXIX. 7. *g* Acts VII. 40.

Thus

Thus stand these *Points* in the *Old Testament*, as most of the Authoritys for them are applied in the *New*; and this is enough to shew that in the *Law* and the *Prophets* that as the *Unity* is asserted in the most absolute Exclusion of *more* God's than *One*, together with *Unity* so asserted a *Plurality* of *Persons* is asserted also, but this Declaration is more full and express in the *Gospels* and *Epistles*, let us therefore take all these *Points* over again, as *they* are further revealed in the *New Testament*, and then in Correspondence to the *Old* we shall find the *Unity* of the God-Head is plainly asserted in the strongest Terms, and the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of the *Persons* evidently asserted also, while the *Name* and *Attributes* of the One God are as plainly ascribed to the *Father*, to the *Son*, and to the *Holy Ghost*, as the *Unity* of *Essence* is asserted.

1. For the *Unity* of the God-Head. Tho' [a] the *Scribe* was not inspired, who asserted it, and tho' his Assertion is properly to be referred to the Doctrine of the *Old Testament*, yet his Answer being approved of by our *Blessed Saviour* doth fully express the Truth according to what our Lord Himself had answered from *Moses* in the verses before [b] *Hear O Israel the Lord our GOD is one Lord*, and both by his own *declaration*, and by his *approbation* of the *Scribe* when he said unto Him, [c] *Thou hast said the Truth, for there is one GOD, and there is none other but* He, our Blessed Lord ratifies the *Doctrine* of the *Old Testament* and maketh it the *Doctrine*

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a Mark XII. 32. b v. 29. c v. 32.

of

of the *Gospel* also. It is objected, that by this Declaration *Christ* excludeth Himself from the God-Head, and He cannot be God, if the *Lord our* God *is one Lord*, if there is *one* God, *and there is none other but He*: But our *Saviour* in this place, as *Moses* in the Book of *Deuteronomy* speaketh absolutely, that *the Lord our* God *is one Lord*: that the Jehovah *our* God *is one* Jehovah, and this *excludeth* not, but manifestly *includeth* whomsoever the *Name* and *Attributes* of Jehovah are *ascribed* unto. If therefore *they* be *ascribed* to the *Son*, this *excludeth* not the *Father*, if to the *Father* this *includeth* the *Son*, and so it may be said of the *Holy Ghost* likewise: For He also, as we have seen, is called Jehovah, and to Him also are the Divine *Attributes* ascribed. The God therefore whom we adore, is One Jehovah; we adore the *Father* and the *Son*, but the *Lord our* God is one Jehovah, and with the *Father* and the *Son* we adore the *Eternal Spirit*, yet *but One* Jehovah. The *Spirit* however *distinct* in *Personal* Operation must be of the *same Essence*, and the *Son* of the *same Nature* with the *Father*. Our Blessed *Saviour* while He asserteth the *Unity*, and repelleth the *Tempter* by the *Scriptures* where it is written, [a] *Thou shalt Worship the Lord thy* God, *and Him only shalt thou serve*, in several Instances admitteth of Divine Adoration and Acknowledgment, nor rebuketh his *Disciple*, *when he answered and said unto Him*, [b] *My Lord and my* God. I will only add, that in several parts of

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a Mat. IV. 10. *b* John XX. 28.

the Book of the *Revelation* He [a] *receiveth* the *Worſhip*, which his [b] *Angel refuſeth*; and it muſt not be pretended, that Himſelf is the *Angel*, who refuſed the *Worſhip*: For it is expreſly ſaid in the ſame Chapter, [c] *I Jeſus have ſent my Angel to teſtify unto you theſe things*: as before in the nineteenth Chapter where the *Angel* in the ſame Terms [d] *forbiddeth* the *Worſhip*, we preſently read that the *Apoſtle ſaw* [e] *Heaven opened, and he ſaw Him, whoſe Name is called the* WORD *of* GOD. KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

2. It is with reference to this *Doctrine* and *Fundamental* Declaration of the *Unity*, that the *Apoſtle* St *Paul* in his firſt *Epiſtle* to the *Corinthians* averreth, that *there is none other* GOD *but One*, in oppoſition to all *falſe* Gods and *falſe* Objects of *Worſhip*, and then declareth, Who this One GOD is ſo far, as to include the *Father* and the *Son*. [f] *We know that an Idol is nothing in the World, and that there is none other* GOD *but One. For though there be, that are called Gods, whether in Heaven, or in Earth, (as there be Gods many and Lords many; But to us there is but One* GOD, *the Father, of whom are all Things, and we in Him, and One Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom are all things, and we by Him*; Theſe Words are anſwerable to the Original Declaration of *Moſes* compriſing the One GOD, and the One LORD OF JEHOVAH: *The Lord our* GOD *is One Lord*; where the *One* GOD, and the *One Lord* is

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a Revelat. V. 8, 9, &c. VI. 10. VII. 10, &c. *b* XX. 9. *c* v. 16. *d* XIX. 10. *e* v. 11, 12, 13, 16. *f* 1 Cor. VIII. 4, 5, 6.

both

both by *Moſes* and St *Paul* put in *Oppoſition* and *Contradiſtinction* to *all other* that are called *Gods* and *Lords*, as the *Heathen* had *many* of *them*.

Here then we have the *Father* and the *Son* aſſerted to be the ONE GOD and ONE LORD of us *Chriſtians*; and in perfect *Unity* with the *Father*, and the *Son* we have alſo,

3. The *Holy Ghoſt*, who together with the *Father* and the *Son is Worſhipped and glorified* in the *Forms* of [a] *Baptiſm*, and of [b] *Bleſſing*: In theſe *Forms* both the *Divinity*, and *Diſtinction* of his *Perſon* are aſſerted, and tho' commonly placed laſt in Order, He is *Co-eternal* and *Co-equal* with the *Father* and the *Son*, foraſmuch as we are *equaly Baptized*, and *Bleſſed* in his *Name*. In all thoſe places, where the *Three Perſons* are mentioned together the *Diſtinction* of the HOLY GHOST, as well, as of the *Father* and the *Son* is evident, in all thoſe places where the *Name*, *Attributes* and *Operation* of GOD are aſcribed unto Him, his *Divinity* is alſo evident, and in his ſeveral *Tranſactions* according to thoſe *Attributes* both the *Divinity* and *Diſtinction* of his *Perſon* are manifeſted unto us.

At the [c] Baptiſm of our *Lord*, we meet the *Three Perſons* together. The *Son* in the *Water*, the *Holy Ghoſt* in the *Air* like a Dove, the *Father* in the Voice. When our Bleſſed Lord maketh this juſt inference, [d] *How much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to*

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a Matt. XXVIII. 19. b 2 Cor. XIII. 14. c Mat. III. 16, 17. d Luke XI. 13.

them that ask him? The *Diſtinction* of *Perſons* and particularly of the *Holy Ghoſt* appeareth. In ſeveral parts alſo of the *Epiſtles*, thoſe eſpecialy of St *Paul* the ſame Diſtinction is expreſſed. I forbear the *Texts*, becauſe I have already recited ſeveral, and muſt repeat them in the Progreſs of theſe Diſcourſes.

The *Divinity* as well as the *Diſtinction* of his *Perſon* is clearly argued in the fifth Chapter of the *Acts*. For St *Peter* queſtioning *Ananias*, [a] *Why hath Satan filled thine Heart to lie unto the Holy Ghoſt*? telleth him, *Thou haſt not lied unto Men, but unto* God: and upon the ſame ground he asketh the *Wife*, [b] *How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord*? To this I may add that noble Proof, which the *Apoſtle* giveth us in ſome Lines before the *Text* of the *Divine Attributes* being aſcribed unto *Him*, ſince [c] *what Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man to conceive, even the Things, which* God *hath prepared for them that love Him*, Theſe hath God *revealed to us by His Spirit*: Namely the Eternal *Purpoſe* and *Method* of our Redemption. *For the Spirit ſearcheth all things, yea the deep things of* God. Words very full and expreſs. Searching and Revealing the *deep things* of God do manifeſtly comprize the *Unity* and *Divinity* of *Eſſence*, together with the *Diſtinction* of his *Perſon*.

And *Both* theſe the *Divinity* and *Diſtinction* of his Perſon are farther manifeſted in his *ſeveral Tranſactions* and *Operations*, as *He* is the

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a Acts V. 3, 4. *b* v. 9. *c* See 1 Cor. II. 9, &c. cited before.

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[a] *Comforter*, the *Holy Spirit* who [b] *Sanctifieth* all the *Elect* Children of God, [c] whose *Temples* we are, [d] the Pledge and [e] Earnest of our *Salvation*, by whom we are *sealed unto the Day of Redemption.* The peculiar Province, He administereth, giveth us the Distinction: the Nature of his Office the Divinity of his *Person*; But this Argument I have treated of before, and shall have occasion to resume, and insist more largely on it, and tho' *touching* the *same* Subjects over again in *several* places may not be altogether so *accurate* as to treat them and absolve them *at once*, yet it may be more useful, by taking several views of them, and placing them in every Point, which can shew them in the best Light, and to the most Advantage for our Apprehension and Conviction of the Truth.

It is not necessary therefore to produce any more Passages at present for the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*: From these, which I mentioned appeareth first the *Unity* of the God-*Head*: *There is none other* God *but One*. Secondly a *Plurality* of *Persons*, namely, the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost* ever subsisting in this one God-Head, of the *same Essence* and *Attributes*, *Eternity* and *Power*, *Each* set forth under the *Name*, and proper *Appellations* of the One God: What is *revealed* therefore concerning *Each* of *these Three Persons* is to be *interpreted*, *received*, and *understood*

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a John XIV, XV, XVI. *b* Rom XV. 16. 1 Corinth. VI. 11. 2 Thess. II. 13. 1 Pet. I. 2. *c* 1 Cor. III. 16. VI. 19. *d* 2 Cor. I. 22. V. 5. *e* Eph. I. 13. IV. 30.

according to the Constant *Tenour* and *Analogy* of *Faith* relating to the Divine *Unity*, and the *Communication* of the *Eternal Essence* and *Attributes* ascribed to the *Father*, to the *Son*, and to the *Holy Ghost*.

The *Plurality* of *Persons*, and the *Unity* of *Essence* being thus far asserted by the *Scriptures*, at present I shall only subjoyn some few *Examples*, or give an Instance or two, in which the *Unity* and *Trinity* are *mutualy* expressed in each other according to the obvious and necessary Interpretation of the Words.

1. The first shall be taken from the eighth Chapter of the *Epistle* to the *Romans*, where the *Apostle* is speaking of the *Spirit* of *Christ* and of God, which according to him is *one* and the *same Spirit*, and consequently both the *Son* and the *Spirit* are *One* with the *Father*. Speaking of the Opposition between the Flesh and the Spirit, that is between our Carnal Minds, and the Spirit of God, he concludeth, [a] *so then they, that are in the flesh*, that is the meer Natural Man, *cannot please* God: *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of* God *dwell in you. Now if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.* Here the Spirit of *Christ* and of God is evidently the *same* Spirit, whose Graces are communicated to the Children of God. The *Juxta Position* the *Terms*, and their Reciprocation with one another is plain enough to convince those, who prefer that way of *Argumentation*, that the Spirit of *Christ*

[a] Rom. VIII. 8, 9.

and

and the Spirit of God is *One Spirit*, indeed it is much clearer than a bare independent unconnected Position of the *Terms* themselves can be. It is even almost as clear at first sight, as *Syllogism* it self, or the references of the *Terms* in *Mathematical* Demonstration, which may possibly be an Objection with those, who decry the use of that strict and conclusive way of *arguing* by the *syllogistical* Form, and prefer the disjoyned *Materials* to the *Building*, or a *Skeleton* to a *Man*; but I enter not now upon the Comparison, and will only infer with the *Apostle*, [a] *Now if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His*: This Spririt therefore called afterwards the Spirit of God, and the [b] *Spirit of Adoption*, as before the Spirit of God, and of *Christ*, is *one* and the *same* Spirit indivisibly *proceeding* from, and Eternaly *united* to the *Father*, and the *Son*, yet *distinct* in *Person* from the *Father* and the *Son*, as the *Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry* Abba, *Father*, is not the *Father*, on whom we call, nor the *Son*, thro' whom we call upon the *Father*, but it is *the* [c] *Spirit of his Son whom GOD hath sent forth into your Hearts crying* Abba, *Father*. This considering the whole Chapter, and the correspondent Doctrine in the Epistle to the *Galatians*, and other places is the Necessary Meaning of the Words, easy, obvious and unconstrained, expressing the *Blessed Trinity* in the most intimate and closest *Unity*.

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[a] Rom. VIII. 9. [b] v. 15. [c] Gal. IV. 6.

2. Another Paſſage, which I ſhall produce, where the *Trinity* and *Unity* are intimately expreſſed in each other is that clear, diſtinct and celebrated place in St *Paul's* firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, where he firſt premiſeth and layeth down a *Rule*, whereby to try the Spirits, [a] *Wherefore I give you to underſtand, that no Man ſpeaking by the Spirit of* GOD *calleth Jeſus accurſed: and that no Man can ſay, that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt.* And then he referreth them to the Fountain and Diſpencer of all Spiritual Gifts, both Ordinary and Extraordinary. [b] *Now there are diverſitys of Gifts, but the ſame Spirit. And there are differences of Adminiſtrations, but the ſame Lord. And there are diverſitys of Operations, but it is the ſame GOD, which worketh all in all*: in the *Gifts*, and *Adminiſtrations* too. For theſe *Gifts*, theſe *Adminiſtrations*, and *Operations*, however they are aſſorted, the *Gifts* to the *Spirit*, the *Adminiſtrations* to our *Lord*, the *Operations* to GOD *the Father*, are yet common, as all external Acts of the *Trinity* are, ſo that what One doeth that doeth the Other alſo. The *Three* Perſons have each their peculiar Province, and theſe *Gifts*, *Adminiſtrations*, and *Operations* flow more peculiarly from that ſpecial Fountain, from which the *Apoſtle* here deriveth them; but we are taught that tho' the *Father* [c] *doth the Works, the Son* [d] *worketh alſo as well as the Father; for what things ſoever the Father doth, theſe alſo doth the Son likewiſe.* Tho' *Gifts* are pe-

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a 1 Corinth. XII. 3. *b* v. 4, 5, 6. *c* John XIV. 10. *d* V. 17, 19.

culiarly

culiarly derived from the *Holy Ghoſt*, yet we are taught [a] *that every good and perfect Gift cometh down from the Father of Lights*; and tho' *Adminiſtrations* are eſpecialy aſcribed unto our *Lord*, yet, that *the* [b] *Holy Ghoſt made Overſeers over the Church of* GOD, *which He hath purchaſed with his own Blood*: And as our *Lord*, [c] *when he aſcended up on high*, and *gave Gifts unto Men, gave ſome, Apoſtles: and ſome, Prophets, and ſome, Evangeliſts, and ſome, Paſtors and Teachers*; GOD alſo *hath* [d] *ſet ſome in the Church, firſt Apoſtles, ſecondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers*, &c. And tho' it is the ſame GOD *which worketh all in all*, yet it is preſently ſaid, [e] *all theſe worketh that One and the ſelf ſame Spirit, dividing to every Man ſeverally, as He will.* Taking the Bleſſed *Trinity* in this view the *Diſtinction* is *Clear*, the *Unity* is *Evident.*

Having thus far ſtated the *Unity* of the GOD-Head, together with the *Divinity* and *Diſtinction* of the *Perſons* therein revealed, I proceed now in the ſecond place,

II. To argue according to theſe *Rules* of *Interpretation* upon them.

In preſerving therefore the *Analogy* of *Faith*, we are to take, what is aſſerted, to be True and Poſitive in Fact according to the moſt natural and obvious ſignification of the Words, and then we are to interpret them agreably and conſiſtently with what we are taught concerning the *Nature* and *Attributes* of GOD.

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a Jam. I 17. *b* Acts XX. 28. *c* Epheſ. IV. 8. 11. *d* 1 Cor. XII. 28. *e* v. 11.

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The *Question* is not, whether we can account for the Point revealed, and solve all Difficultys upon the Principles of *Human Reasoning*, but we are to take them, as they are Revealed, and believe them according to that *Rule of Faith*, which is delivered in the *Scriptures*: only in the mean time let *Human Reason* satisfy all Natural Difficultys, which are more properly its province, before it pretendeth to reject Supernatural Truths, for indeed it is not able to account for the least Difficulty rising from the *Essence* of the meanest Creature, even such as a *Worm* or a *Straw*. It is forced to consent to Facts in *Nature*, notwithstanding it cannot account for them, and upon the same and higher Principles also it must assent to Facts of *Revelation*: In these the *Scriptures* are the *Rule*, so that whatsoever is there delivered concerning the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*, must be so interpreted, as with the *Unity* of *Essence* to preserve what is equaly asserted, the Reality of the *Relation*, and the Distinction of the *Persons*: and therefore because *Each* is delivered to be God both by *Appellation* and *Attributes*, and *there is none other* God *but One*, and we are previously assured by a former *Revelation* of the *Unity* of the *Divine Nature*, That God *is One* of an *Eternal*, a most *Simple*, and *Indivisible Essence*, we must understand whatever is revealed concerning the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost* in a sense consistent with the *Unity*, the *Indivisibility*, and *Eternity* of the God-Head.

That there should be *Three Persons* subsisting in *One Eternal undivided Essence*, is what we could

could have no *Apprehenſions* of without a *Revelation*: But ſo it is *revealed*: And as we cannot ſay, it is *Impoſſible*, or a *Contradiction*, that it ſhould be ſo, unleſs we could prove that God exiſteth after the manner of *Men*, we have nothing to do, but when we are ſatisfied of the *Revelation*, to believe, for ſuppoſing only the Fact, that *Three Perſons* are equaly poſſeſſed of the *ſame Divine Attributes*, even in our way of thinking, they muſt be *Equal* and *One* in *Eſſence*, as they are *diſtinct* in *Relation*: We are Judges only of the Fact in the Words in which it is delivered, and of the Evidence which is offered us, that the *Revelation* is from God, and therefore, where we find the *Divine Appellation* and *Attributes* aſcribed, there we muſt acknowledge God to be expreſſed: and becauſe *there is none other GOD, but One*, and the *Divine Appellation* and *Attributes* are aſcribed to the *Father*, to the *Son*, and to the *Holy Ghoſt*, we do therefore by moſt certain Conſequence collect, that the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt* is *One GOD*.

To contend that the *Son* cannot, and that the *Holy Ghoſt* cannot be God, becauſe God is One, is to *deny* the *Revelation*: and to argue from our Notions of *Created Exiſtence*, which yet are ſhort and imperfect, to a *Being Uncreated* and *Divine*, is upon the *Principles* of *Reaſon* it ſelf moſt highly *abſurd*, as it is abſolutely *impoſſible*.

Of the *Exiſtence* of God we are aſſured: But how He *exiſteth* we cannot diſcover further, than He is pleaſed to diſcover to us: That the *Creator exiſteth* not as we do, we muſt neceſſarily

rily conclude, and when we conſider the beſt Notions we have of *Exiſtence*, we ſhall ſoon be convinced, that we have none at all of the *Divine Exiſtence* beyond this neceſſary Concluſion, which is alſo *Revelation*, that HE IS: This is the Language of GOD Himſelf emphaticaly expreſſing *who He is* by his Exiſtence. [a] *I AM THAT I AM*: and accordingly He commandeth *Moſes* to tell the Children of *Iſrael*, [b] *I AM hath ſent me unto you.*

We cannot form any Notions of *Exiſtence*, but from our Own, or That of Things about us; but to ſuppoſe that GOD *exiſteth* as we do, giveth us not ſo much an *imperfect*, as a *falſe* Notion of the *Divine Exiſtence*, and therefore tho' from *our own* we form to our ſelves ſome Notion of the *Divine Exiſtence*, yet we muſt conclude, that GOD *exiſteth* in a manner moſt incomprehenſible, of which we can frame no juſt and Adequate Conception: We are ignorant, after all our Vanity and proud Pretenſions, we are vaſtly ignorant of our own *Exiſtence*, in what Phyſical manner it is, much more then of our *Creator*'s. The firſt Notion we have of *Exiſtence*, is the *meer Being* of any thing, that is ſubject to our Senſes, as of a *ſtock*, or a *ſtone*: the next is the *Being* of any thing accompanied with Life and Motion, as of *Plants* and *Animals*: the moſt perfect is of Rational Beings, as of *our ſelves*; But of our own *Exiſtence* we have no further Notion, than that we *Reſpire*, and that we *Think*: If we would know *how* we do exiſt, the *Apoſtle* is the beſt *Philoſopher*, refer-

[a] Exod. III. 14. [b] Ibid.

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ring us for the Continuance to the firſt Cauſe of our *Exiſtence*, even to our great Creator. [a]*For in Him we live and move, and have our Being*, that is, we *exiſt* and *are* in Him.

It hath been the Extravagant Fancy of ſome *Notional* and *Brain-ſick* Writers, that all we ſee, and Converſe with, even our ſelves, are nothing but *Accidents* and *Appearances*: And with reſpect to the *Exiſtence* of God, it is true, we are no more: Compared with Him we are but *Images* and *ſhadows*, as to our *Bodys* in a continual *flux* and *fleeting*, till God ſhall *fix* the *neceſſary* Proportions, and glorify them for ever. As to our Souls, only *exiſting* by his free Will, and Almighty Power: nothing is *neceſſarily exiſtent* but the Divine Eſſence, and however our Souls are *immortal*, they are made ſo by Him, *who created all things, and upholdeth all things by the Word of his Power.* But here our *Life* is properly compared to the [b]*ſhadow, that departeth*; and when we were *created in the Image of GOD*, the *Word* we ſo tranſlate properly ſignifys a *Shadow*, or *Adumbration* of the *Deity*. And ſhall we then meaſure his *Exiſtence* by *ours*? And boldly pronounce it *impoſſible* for the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt* to *ſubſiſt* in *One Eternal Eſſence*, when, if they do *ſubſiſt at all*, they muſt *ſubſiſt* in *Unity* of *Eſſence*.

Others there are, who in attempting to account for the *Exiſtence* of God and *themſelves*, proceed upon an *Atheiſtical* Scheme, and reſolve the *Divinity* into *Intelligence*, *Life* and *Matter*, *eternaly united*, and *differently modified*

a Acts XVII. 28. b Pſal. CIX. 23.

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according to the several Kinds of *Beings*, and the successive Numbers of *Men*. This is no other than *Spinoza*'s Hypothesis of *One Substance* revived: and GOD is supposed to be nothing but *Matter* endued with *Life* and *Intelligence*: It maketh the World *Eternal* according to its present Form, and Order of Beings, and denieth GOD to be a pure Spiritual Being by affirming, that were He *such*, He could not produce *any* Body or Being, such as is Matter, *different* from *His* own Nature; and therefore I would observe upon this Principle *He* can create *Nothing at all*: Thus these Men *deny* a *Creator*, they *scoff* at all Proofs of a Being *Eternal*, *Simple* and *Uncompounded* in his *Essence*, as *Contradictions* in *Terms*, and while they pretend that the Being of GOD, of *Him*, whom *we* believe in, is *not demonstrable*, or rather is *impossible*, *such* is their *Blasphemy*! they take upon themselves to *demonstrate* that there is *none* at all, that is *none besides*, or *distinct* from the *Universe*. Such is their *Conceitedness*, and *such* their *Philosophy*!

It is not my Purpose to *digress* and *debate*, I will only *observe* upon it, that unless the *Universe* be *Infinite*, they deny an *Infinite Being*: and if they suppose the *Universe* to be *Infinite*, they still deny an *Infinite Intelligence*; For they teach that there is some certain Quantity of *Intelligence* in the *Universe*, and by making it necessarily to *subsist in*, and to be *dependent on* a certain Quantity of *Matter*, they do *both* ways deny an *Infinite Intelligence*, and an *Infinite Being*.

Upon this Notion of *Intelligence* they would account for *the Existence*, and *Eternity of Human*

man Souls, making them *participant* or rather *Portions* of this *Universal Intelligence*, and of the same *Identical* Nature with the *Intelligence* it self: By the same Rule they may make the *Body* Eternal too: For by Death it is resolved into that Universal Quantity of Matter which is never *encreased* or *diminished*, just as the Soul reuniteth *with*, or mergeth *in* that Universal Quantity of *Intelligence*, (which likewise is never *encreased* nor *diminished*) from which it issued, and subsisted in the Body for a *time*. So they make both Body and Soul to be *parts* of the *Deity*, as this *Universal Intelligence* is *differently modified*, and *successively distributed* into *several* Beings, *or diverse Modifications* of *Matter*; otherwise according to them GOD Himself, (*such* as *theirs*, and then they say true) cannot make the Soul Immortal, nor extend a *Finite* Being created in *Time* to an *Infinity* of Duration to continue for *ever*.

The sum is this, that as the whole Quantity of *Intelligence* is *Eternaly* united to the whole Quantity of *Matter*, some parts of this *Intelligence* are successively united to some parts or systems of *Matter*, and the several Beings of *Men* result from the Different Modification of *Matter* and *Spirit*, which I would observe must arise either from Mechanical, or Fortuitous Changes from one *Form* to another; and not from any Direction or Spontaneous *Operation* of the *Deity*: For the *Deity* is no Distinct Being it self, but the very same with this *Matter*, and *Spirit*, and *Life* under all the various and successive *Modifications* of them; and therefore

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it is absurd to ask, How the *Deity modifieth*, or is *connected* with the *Modifications* of *Matter* and *Spirit*; however it is not impossible to answer it; for if such a *Deity* can act *at all*, it modifies *it self*, and is *connected* with, because *it self* is nothing but, *these Modifications*.

The *Principle* these Men proceed on is the same, I took notice of in the Beginning, that Nothing is *true*, but what is *demonstrable*; this holdeth only in Subjects capable of *Demonstration*, and so far as they are so. But the *Divine Being*, or the *Being* of God is *demonstrable* as far as a *First Cause* is *demonstrable*, and all the *Attributes* also, so far, as from the *Effects* we collect, they are implied in the *First Cause*: Thus the *Natural Attributes* are demonstrable from the *Frame*, and *Order*, and *Disposition* of the *World*, and the *Moral* from the *Nature* of *Man*, and the *Obligations* he is under. But it is familiar with *these Men*, when we say that God is a *Pure Spiritual Uncompounded Eternal Omniscient Being* to say, *this* is *Absurd*, *this* can't be *demonstrated*, *this* is *impossible*. And while according to their gross Material Conceptions they pretend to *demonstrate* an *Intelligent Material* God, they *blasphemously* call the very *Notion* of an *Eternal Being purely intelligent existing from all Eternity* in an *Immense Space Void of Matter*, a *Contradiction* in *Terms*; whereas there can be no *Contradiction*, but what *Limiteth* and *Circumscribeth* the *Deity*.

And because if the *Universe* or all *Parts* of the *World Material* and *Intelligent*, *Animate* or *Inanimate* is the God of *these Men* exclusive of any *superior independent* Being, all the *Evil* as well

well as *Good* in the World must be imputed to this *strange Deity*, they do therefore deny any *Original Distinction* between *Good* and *Evil*, and make *Moral Evil* as Mechanical and Necessary as they do *Natural*, tho' by the way *Natural Evil* is not Mechanical, nor in it self absolutely necessary, and not at all so finaly, but as it is pœnal, and a Consequence of *Moral Evil* going before it. However these People represent *Moral Evil* as necessary and mechanical, as they esteem *Natural* to be, and no more avoidable than the Piercing of a *sword* thro' a *penetrable* Body, or the fall of a *stone* that is thrown up in the Air. So that according to them, there is no such thing as *Natural* or *Moral Evil* in the World; for *Natural Evil* is nothing but the *Disagreeableness of Natural Things to our Senses*, and *Moral Evil* is nothing, but *one Man's Actions being Disagreable to another*: Such a *Deity* and such *Morality* are every way suitable to each other: This cancelleth all Obligation, and while the *whole* is God, there is also no *Object* of *Worship*, for why should *one part* of the *Divinity* worship *another*? or if *any* be supposed, a *stock* or a *stone* is as *proper* an Object, as *any other*, since the *Worship* must be addressed to a *Deity*, which is as *Essentialy Material*, as it is *Intelligent*: The bare representation of these *Schemes* is sufficient to refute them, and for answer, we need not refer these excellent *Reasoners*, these *great* Masters of *Demonstration* to the *Bible*, and *Revelation*, which they do not admit of, nor to the *Modern* Performances of *Christian* Writers in a *Philosophical* Consideration of these Points, but

to *Plato* and *Tully*, nay even to *Aristotle* himself, who, tho' he thought the World Eternal, as an Eternal Effect of the *Supreme Cause*, yet he made it not his God, nor disowned a superiour, independent, uncompounded and Creative *Power*. These Men sometimes speak, as if they acknowledged a *Deity* extrinsic, and diverse from the *World* as ruling & directing the whole; but it is impossible upon their *Plan* to conceive, that an *Eternal Intelligence*, is (in their way of speaking) the *ruling Principle*, which *guideth* all the *Motions* and *Operations* of *Matter*, since *Matter* is *equaly* a *Principle* with *this Intelligence*, and *equaly* constituteth their Notion of a God: otherwise, if *Matter* and *Intelligence* were *independent Principles*, *Intelligence*, according to *them*, could never have *created Matter*, and *Matter* could never have *received Life* and *Intelligence*. *One* part of this *Affair* may be *true*, as the *other* is highly *Blasphemous* and *Atheistical*: *Matter* is not capable of *Intelligence*, nor perhaps of *Life* any further than the Motions and Sensations of the several parts of an *Animal* Body can be called so. But I say, and so take leave of these *Impious Absurditys* for the present, that what cannot *dispose Matter* into its several *Forms*, can never *direct it*, nor *act* at all as a *superior Principle* upon *it*. *Matter* in their *Scheme* is as much the *Divinity*, as *Life* and *Intelligence*, equaly *Eternal*, and equaly *Unchangeable*.

These Men *deny* the God of *Heaven* whom *Nature* declareth unto them. *Others*, who own the God of *Nature* deny all *Revelation*, and *those*, with whom our more *immediate* Controversy

versy lies, *own* indeed a *Revelation*, but *deny* the the Doctrines *revealed*, in the *manner*, the *Scriptures* Reveal *them*, for this Reason cheifly, because in the plain naked Construction *they* are *incomprehensible*, we know not *how* or the *manner how these things should be*; and in their way of Construction they can *account*, as they imagine, *how these things are*, and so they take away all *Mystery*, and *deny* the *Divinity revealed*, as much as *others*, that *deny* the *Revelation*.

Here indeed is the *Stumbling-Block*, and *Rock of Offence*, when we will measure the Great God by *our selves*, and attempt Impossibilitys to explain what is *incomprehensible*, (that is to explain what is *inexplicable*) and to argue upon *Human* Principles, as if because *three Men* or *three Creatures* make *three Individuals*, that therefore *Three Divine Persons* cannot subsist in *One Eternal Undivided Essence*. This is to *suppose*, what our own Reason will tell us is *not* to be *supposed*, that God *existeth*, as *we* do; But when once we consider, that God must *exist* in a manner vastly different from his *Creatures*, and that He hath revealed to us, that the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* are *equaly* of the *same Nature* and *Essence*, then we must, if we assent to the *Fact*, agree also, that *they* are of *one undivided*, because of an *Indivisible Essence*.

This *Argument* I shall pursue further in my next *Discourse*, and conclude at present with an *Application* of what hath been now delivered, to the *Opposers* of the *Christian* Faith, of whatever *Denomination* they may be, who *admit* a *Revelation*, and yet *deny* the Doctrines *revealed*.

1. The *Arians* and *Socinians* do both offend againſt *theſe Rules*, and departing from the *Analogy* of *Faith*, they depart from the *Analogy* of *Language* too; that is they *interpret* what is *revealed* concerning the *Son* and the *Holy Ghoſt* either too *groſly* or too *Figuratively*, making them either *Creatures* of a *different* and *divided Eſſence* from the *Father*, or elſe *meer Names* and *Modes* without any *real ſubſiſtence* anſwerable to thoſe *Names*, or the *Operations* aſcribed unto them. If they aſſert the *Divinity* of the *Perſons*, they make *Three GODS*: if they allow not the *Divinity*, they make the *Son* and the *Holy Ghoſt meer Creatures*: Here is no *medium*: they muſt be included in the *One* or the *Other*: There is and we can imagine *no middle* ſort of Beings between God and his *Creatures*: *ſome* Beings, as the higheſt *Angels*, are indeed more Excellent, than *others*; but the greateſt *Angel* is as much a *Creature*, as a *Worm*. It is abſurd therefore and incongruous for the *Arians* and *Socinians* to give the *Name* and *Worſhip*, where they deny the *Eſſence* of God: and with regard to the *Son* eſpecialy, (for the *Holy Ghoſt* they have ſet aſide) to *recogniſe* his *Titles*, and *deny* his *Divinity*, this is to rank Him under that part of the Diviſion, which St *Paul* maketh in *Oppoſition* to the *true* God, among thoſe *that be called Gods*, and flatly to *contradict* the *Apoſtle*, who placeth the *Son* on the *other ſide* in the *other Member* of the *Diviſion* equaly with the *Father*; *But to us there is but one GOD the Father*; *and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt*.

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2. Thoſe, who allow the true and proper *Divinity* without acknowledging a *real Diſtinction* of *Perſons*, do as expreſly contradict the *Revelation*, as thoſe, who *own* the *Diſtinction* and *deny* the *Divinity* of the *Perſons*. Now the *ſame* way of *Interpretation*, which convinceth the *Sabellians*, and all that hold with them, of the *Divinity* of the *Perſons*, that, *whatever* they are, they are truly *Divine*, would, if attended to, convince them of the *Diſtinction* too, that, as they are *truly* Divine, they are alſo *realy* diſtinct: And the *ſame* Rule of *Interpretation*, which convinceth the *Arian* and *Socinian*, and all, that any way hold with them, of the *real* Diſtinction of the *Perſons*, would, if applied to *that ſide* of the Queſtion, convince them of the *true* Divinity likewiſe, that the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, as they are *realy* Diſtinct, are alſo *truly* Divine.

The *Sabellians* in owning the *Divinity* underſtand the *Texts*, which aſcribe this *Divinity* to to the *Son*, and to the *Holy Ghoſt*, in the *ſame* proper and obvious *ſignification* of the *Words*, as they underſtand thoſe *Texts*, which aſcribe *it* to the *Father*; and if, maintaining, as they do the *Unity* of the God-*Head*, they would take thoſe *Texts*, which reveal a *Diſtinction* of *Perſons*, in the *ſame* obvious *ſenſe* with thoſe, which aſſert the *Divinity*, they muſt then acknowledge that in the *Unity* of *Eſſence* there are *Three Perſons*, and *One* God.

On the other Hand, if the *Arians*, and *Socinians*, and all, that think with them, would reflect upon *what* Grounds they acknowledge

this *Distinction* of *Persons*, they will find, there is as *strong* reason for acknowledging the *Divinity* also: And if all *Opposers* of the *Christian* Doctrine would upon the firm *Basis* of the *Divine Unity* consider what is expressly *revealed* concerning the *Divine Nature*, they must acknowledge the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of *Persons* to be clearly asserted in the *Unity* of *Essence*.

This then is the *Catholic Doctrine*, which owneth the *Divinity* with the *Sabellians*, and the *Distinction* of *Persons* with the *Arians*, but still in a true *consistent* sense with the *Divine Unity*. And we do therefore most *devoutly acknowledge*, and most *zealously claim* and *profess* the *Father*, the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost*, to be the *One* God of us *Christians*, from all *Eternity* subsisting *together* after a most *incomprehensible* and *unutterable* manner in the *same Nature* and *Essence*, of the *same Substance*, *Power*, and *Eternity*.

To whom therefore be ascribed all Honour, and Glory, and Worship: all Might, Majesty, and Dominion in all Churches of the Saints throughout all Ages unto the End of the World, and for Ever and Ever. Amen.

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SERMON VII.

Preached *May* 1. 1729.

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1 Cor. II. 13.

—— *Comparing Spiritual Things with Spiritual.*

IN propoſing the *Analogy* of *Faith* as a *Rule* of *Interpretation*, I have inſiſted on no more, than what is required in the *Interpretation* of all *other* Writings, as well as the *Scriptures*; Other Writers may indeed be *inconſiſtent*, and *contradict* themſelves, and yet where we do clearly know their *Principles* and *Opinions*, there, if *what* ſeemeth at firſt view a *Contradiction*, be nevertheleſs *capable* of

of a fair *Interpretation consistent* with their *known* Principles and Doctrines, we are certainly in all Justice obliged to understand, and *interpret* all *such* Passages in a *Consistent* sense: much more are we obliged to observe this *Rule* in the *Interpretation* of *Scripture*, because all, that own the Divine *Revelation*, must be previously assured, that there can be no real *Inconsistency*; but that there must be a perfect Harmony and *Agreement* of all the *Parts* throughout the *Whole*.

Where the *Grammatical* Construction lieth *indifferent* to two *Interpretations*, one of which maketh a *Consistent*, the other an *Inconsistent* sense, it is easy to determine *which* is to be preferred. So in *various Readings*, if according to *some* the sense be *Inconsistent*, and *Consistent* according to *other* Readings, we may easily determine *which* to follow, especialy if the *Consistent* sense agreeth with the most *ancient* Authoritys, whether they be *Copys* or *Citations*: To this I may add, that when the *Construction* and *Interpretation* on the *one* side are *Natural* and *Easy*, on the *other* side *Forced* and *Constrained*: where the *Readings* on *one* side are *ancient* and well *supported*, on the *other doubtful*, and *suspected*: where on *one* side from a *Natural* Construction, and the most *Authentical* Readings there ariseth a *Natural* and *Consistent* Interpretation, and an Unnatural and *Inconsistent* sense is owing to a *forced* Construction, and *uncommon* Readings on the *other*, the *Rule* is plain; and these short Observations are sufficient to put an End at once to the whole *Arian* and *Socinian* Scheme, especialy, if from the *Scriptures* it be carried on and

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applied to the Earliest *Fathers* of the *Church*; and then there will appear a perfect *Symmetry* and *Proportion* between the *Scriptures*, and that *Uniform* Profession of the *Faith* built upon *them*, which the *Church* hath ever *held fast* and *inviolable* against all *Opposition* and *Innovation* whatever.

And thus the *sense* of the *Primitive* Writers confirmeth *that* of the *Scriptures*, not only as they may be presumed to know the *Doctrines* of the *Church*, and all those [a] things, *which are most surely believed among us*, but as these *Doctrines* do necessarily rise from these *Rules* of *Interpretation*: and as the *Fathers* agree to *this* sense of the *Scriptures*, we should without the *Fathers*, that is, if their *Writings* had never come to our Hands, *interpret* the Scriptures to the *same* sense, if we took them only, and understood them in the natural way of an Easy unstrained Construction, founded on the best and most Authentic Readings; especialy when *this sense* made the Scriptures *Consistent*, and *the sense* our *Adversarys* put upon them, maketh them *inconsistent* with themselves in respect to *those* places particularly, where the *sense* on *both* sides is agreed in, as namely in the *Unity* of the God-*Head*.

When, I say, the *Fathers* agree with the Scriptures according to *these* Rules of Interpretation, I do not mean, nor intend, that *all* their *Expositions* and *Interpretations* are agreable to *these* Rules; For they often fall into *Figurative*

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a Luke I. 1.

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and *Allegorical* Interpretations, and therefore we muſt diſtinguiſh between the *Doctrine* they teach, and the *Uſe* and *Application*, they make of any Paſſages in the *Scriptures*: In their *Figurative* and *Allegorical Explications*, they are not declaring the *Doctrines* of the *Church*, but are only drawing *Uſes* from *ſome*, eſpecialy the *Typical* and *Hiſtorical* parts of the *Scripture*: and they did not mean, that thoſe *Scriptures* themſelves were meerly *Figurative* and *Allegorical*, but they took them and underſtood them *firſt* in their *plain* and *Hiſtorical* ſenſe, as to the Facts, and Expreſſions, and then they *allegoriſed* upon them according to the Richneſs and Luxuriance of their Imagination. So that with them the *Allegory* is not the *proper* and *determinate* ſenſe, but only the *Inſtruction* and *Improvement*, they draw from thoſe ſeveral parts of the *Scripture*. This diſtinguiſheth the *Allegorical* from the *Typical* parts: The *Typical* having always a *correſpondent* Completion, where the *ſecond* ſenſe is *Literal*; whereas the *Allegorical* are quite the *Reverſe*, where the *firſt* ſenſe is *Literal*, and the *ſecond Figurative* only.

This by the way is alſo a full Anſwer to all thoſe, who pretend the *Facts*, eſpecialy the *Miracles* recorded in the *Scriptures* are only *Figurative*, *Typical*, or *Allegorical*; but they may as reaſonably deny the Truth of *any Facts* recorded in *any Hiſtory*; and I would obſerve, that, whereas they make the *Miracles* of our Lord meerly *Typical*, and *allegoriſe* them to a *Spiritual* Meaning and Effect, *Types* themſelves both in *Perſons* and *Things* are real *Facts*, tho' *Figurative*

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and *Relative* in their *signification*, so the *Killing of the Passover* was as real a *Fact* as the *Death of Christ*; and *Allegorys* semblably are formed upon *Types* as well as upon other *Facts*, where the *Fact* is *first* acknowledged, *before* the *Allegory* is made.

From hence likewise we are furnished with an *Answer* to all those *Figurative* Explications of the great *Articles* of our *Faith* relating to the *Birth* and *Sufferings* and *Death* and *Resurrection* of our Lord, to the *Truth* of his *Eternal Relation*, that *He* is realy the *Son* of the *Father*, and of *all*, that *He* hath *done* for our *Salvation*: These are all explained away in Effect, by *some*, who deny the *Divinity*, and by *others* who deny both the *Divinity* and *Humanity* of *Christ* our Saviour, whereas all *these Points* are strictly to be received, as *so many Historical Facts*, and *Assertions* delivered by God *Himself*, and not to be understood as so many *Figurative* Expressions, and *Allegorical* Conveyances of *Instruction* and *Improvement* to our *Minds*.

It is easy enough to distinguish between a *plain* and *tropical*, a *literal* and *figurative* sense: When our Lord calleth Himself a [a] *Door* and a [b] *Vine*, the sense is *Figurative*: when He saith [c] *I am the Way*, *the Truth and the Life*, the sense is *Figurative* and *Allegorical*: when *He* is called the *Son of* God, and the *Actions* of his Life are recorded, *these* are *all* to be taken in the *plain* accustomed *Literal* meaning of the Words, and it is as unreasonable to turn them to a *Tropical*

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a John X. 9. *b* XV. 1, 5. *c* XIV. 6.

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ſenſe, as it is to take *Him literaly* for a *Door* or a *Vine*, and his *Diſciples* for the *Branches*.

I have laid it down for a Foundation, that in the *ſame* way, in which we are taught to conceive and to ſpeak of GOD and his *Attributes*, we muſt alſo conceive and ſpeak of all the *Things of* GOD, *which no Man knoweth, but the Spirit of* GOD, and therefore they are taught, *not in the Words which Man's Wiſdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth.* Concerning GOD and his *Attributes* we are aſſured that in *Himſelf* and his *Perfections He* is *Incomprehenſible.* For altho' *He* is truly *Powerful*, *Wiſe* and *Good* agreably to our beſt and completeſt Notions of *Goodneſs*, *Wiſdom*, and *Power*, yet *He* is *ſo* in a manner tranſcendently different from *what* is *Goodneſs*, *Wiſdom*, and *Power* in the higheſt Rank of *Created* Beings, *above* and *beyond* all *Degrees* we can imagine, where the *higheſt* Degrees are but ſo many *Limitations* and *Imperfections* with reſpect to that Glorious Being, who is *Infinite* and *Unbounded* in his own *Eſſential* Excellence and Perfections. For all *Power* is *weak* which is not *Univerſal*, and all *Goodneſs deficient* which reacheth not to every thing, and [a] *our Goodneſs*, tho' it could reach to every thing elſe, even *to the Saints*, yet *extendeth not unto thee, O* GOD; and all *Wiſdom is ſhort-ſighted* which is confined within the Verge of *Human* Speculation, and *Human* Action: nay *Wiſdom*, *Goodneſs* and *Power* are imperfect with regard to their Extent, tho' moving in the larger Sphere of *Angelical Intelli-*

[a] Pſalm XVI. 2.

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gences. And therefore, ſo tranſcendent is GOD's Glory, that we can conceive of *Him*, and expreſs his *Attributes* by way of *Analogy* and Reſemblance only, not as *He is in Himſelf*, but as we are any ways able to apprehend *Him*. This *Analogy*, tho' it cannot riſe unto it, doth yet expreſs the greateſt *Reality*: That GOD is WHAT HE IS in *Eſſence* and *Perfection* more truly, realy and ſubſtantialy, than we, or any of his Creatures are.

For to inſtance in his *Power*, which after the utmoſt ſtretch of our Imagination is beſt conceived by its wonderful Effects; What is the *Power* of any Created Being either in *Kind* or *Degree*? In *Degree* it is *Nothing*; in *Kind* it is totaly *diſtinct*, as the Great *Creator* and his *Creation* differ from the *Artificer* and his *Sphere*: and yet when from thoſe Natural *Powers*, which can do *ſomething*, we look up to that *Power*, [a] *who can do every thing*, and conſider what *He* hath done, we have then attained to the beſt Notion, we can frame of a Real and proper *Power*, tho' infinitely ſhort of its *Tranſcendent Greatneſs*, as it is in the *Almighty*.

Since then we have no other way of conceiving and expreſſing the *Divine Nature* and *Attributes*, than this of *Analogy* and Reſemblance, which *Himſelf* hath choſen to reveal them to us; and ſince in all his other *Revelations*, *He* ſpeaketh in the *ſame* manner, applying and accommodating *them* to our *primary* Notions and Conceptions of things, we are therefore to re-

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[a] Job XLII. 2.

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ceive and understand whatever *He* hath *revealed* concerning *Himself*, and his *Transactions* with Mankind, as so many *Truths* positively *asserted* by *Him*, that the *Facts* are *Real*, as the *Manner* is *Incomprehensible*.

When therefore it is *revealed*, that *Christ* is the *Son* of God, we acknowledge the Truth of the *Relation* to be *Real*, as between *Father*, and *Son* among *Men*; but because the *Son* must be Essentialy of the *same* Nature with the *Father*, and the *Divine Nature* and *Essence* is ever *One*, therefore the *Son*, tho' *He* maketh a *Distinct Person*, is nevertheless *not* divided from the *Father*, but ever *One* with the *Father* and the *Holy Spirit*: So again, *Begotten* signifieth as real a Communication of *Essence*, as among *Men*, but when applied to the *Father* and the *Only Begotten Son*, we cannot understand it grosly after the manner of *Men*, but we believe the *Generation*, that is the *Eternal Communication* of the *Divine Essence* to be as *real*, as the *manner* is *incomprehensible*.

In all these *Revelations*, the same *Analogy* prevaileth, as is used in conceiving, and expressing the *Divine Attributes*, which we cannot conceive, but in those *substituted* Notions, which God Himself hath *used* to convey them to us.

Taking the *Language* therefore in this *Analogy*, and understanding the Words, which the *Holy Ghost teacheth* after this manner, there ariseth an exact *Analogy* or Agreement of *Faith* also thro' all the several *Articles* relating to God, and our *Redemption*.

This

This I have in ſome meaſure explained already ſo far, as it concerneth the *Unity* of the God-*Head*, and the *Plurality* of *Perſons* in that *Unity*, taking *Perſons* there for three diſtinct *Subſiſtencys* in the ſame *One Undivided Eſſence* according to the ſeveral *Property* of their *different* ſubſiſting. All the Confuſion, and Contradiction about this Sublime *Myſtery* ariſe from reaſoning after the Manner of Men, and taking *Perſon* in the ſtrict Human acceptation for a diſtinct *Individual intelligent Agent*, as *three Men* are *three Perſons* divided from one another, who know not each others Thoughts, no Man knoweth *the things of Man, ſave the Spirit of a Man that is in him*: whereas to ſhew the Difference, and that our Reaſonings will not hold, we are aſſured, that *no one, but the Spirit of* God *knoweth the things of* God: both of the *Father* and the *Son*, and this *Spirit* of God is therefore, tho' a *diſtinct Perſon*, yet *One GOD* with the *Father*, and the *Son*.

To make *Perſon* and *Intelligent Agent ſtrictly*, and *convertibly* the *ſame* ſo, as to conſtitute ſo many *Individuals* as there are *Perſons*, is to argue both *falſely* and *fallaciouſly* from *Human* Notions to *Divine*, and to make the *Perſons* of the God-Head to ſubſiſt, as *Human Perſons* do, as if, becauſe there is but *One* God, *One Divine Being*, therefore there can be but *One Perſon*, or if *more Perſons*, there muſt be ſo many *Individuals*. But if we ſpeak Abſolutely of God there is properly *no Perſon* at all to be conſidered: The God-Head it ſelf, the *Divine Eſſence* is never conceived, as a *Perſon*: *Perſon* is properly

a *social* and *relative*, not an *absolute* and *solitary Term*: In the God-Head *it self* without the *Son* there cannot be the *Person* of the *Father*: the *Personality* is founded in the *Relation* and *Operations* of the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost*, whereby they are *so* distinguished, that *One* is not the *Other*. The *Acts* are some of them *peculiar* and *distinct*: The *Essence*, *Substance* and *Divinity* is *common*, *equal*, and the *same*.

As therefore the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* have the same *Attributes* ascribed unto them without any Limitation or Intimation of *Higher* or *Lower*, *Mediate* or *Ultimate*, and all the *Divine Worship* paid, and all the *Divine Attributes* ascribed unto the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* do terminate and center in the *One True* God, we are necessarily taught, while we acknowledge every *Person by Himself to be* God *and Lord*, that there is only *One* God, *and no other*: the *Divine Nature* being thus communicated *indivisibly* from the *Father* to the *Son*, and from *both* to the *Holy Ghost*; and when we are able to comprehend *How* the *Divine Nature* subsisteth, and to prove, that the Great God must exist, as *we do*, and beget by Multiplication, as *we do*, then these mighty *Reasoners* may be heard, but till then, all the *Nonsense* and *Contradiction* is their *own*, and if they will not keep it, they must be content, when they have *uttered* it, to *take it back again* to *themselves*.

In the former Branches of this Discourse, that we might interpret one part of Scripture agreably to another, I have proved first the *Unity* of the God-Head, next the *Distinction* of *Persons*,

Persons with the proper *Divinity* of the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* both from the *Old Testament* and the *New*. From *Isaiah* I have proved that *This One only and True* God *will not give his Honour to another*, nor *his Praise to graven Images*: From St *Paul* I have proved, that the *Father* and the *Son* are placed as one *Member* of the *Division* in Contradistinction to all the false *Nominal Gods* of the *Heathen* on the other side of the *Division*, and from several pregnant passages I have also showed, that the *Holy Ghost is* God, *equal* and *together* with the *Father*, and the *Son*, and from all this I have inferred, as the *Catholic Church* hath always done, that in the *Divine Nature*, there are *Three Persons*, and *One* God: That the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* is the *One* God *revealed* to us in the Holy Scriptures, as first *Creating*, and since *Redeeming* the World by a Wonderful *Oeconomy*, and *Dispensation* of *Love* and *Mercy* and *Justice* in that full and abundant *satisfaction* paid for the *sins* of Mankind, comprising the whole Frame and Order of *Redemption* from our Forfeiture in *Adam* to our Restoration in *Christ*.

But because in these Sacred Disquisitions what is comparatively less obvious and clear is to be interpreted by what is evident, and universaly acknowledged, I proposed, that according to this *Analogy* of *Faith*, whatever is *Fundamentaly* laid down *prior* to any *subsequent Revelation* may be *first* considered, and *then* the *subsequent Revelation* interpreted agreably to the *Former*.

To this End I conſidered *firſt*, *What* was *revealed* of GOD in *general* concerning his *Nature* and *Attributes*, and then *ſecondly*, *What* hath been *revealed* more *particularly* with reference to the *Divine Oeconomy* and *Tranſactions* with Mankind.

In interpreting theſe laſt points agreably to the *Divine Nature* in *general*, I did not think it neceſſary to go over *each* of the ſeveral *Attributes*, but did rather refer *all* that need be ſaid, to thoſe *three inherent*, and *inſeparable Propertys* of the *Divine Nature* in our firſt Conceptions of it: *namely*, the *Unity*, *Indiviſibility*, and *Eternity*; and then, when we underſtand what is *revealed* concerning the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt* conſiſtently with this *Unity*, *Indiviſibility* and *Eternity*, we have the true and full *Analogy* of *Faith* in one View.

I meddle not with the *Metaphyſical Nature* and *Subſtance* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, nor do I enquire in *what Metaphyſical manner* the *Son* deriveth his *Being* from the *Father*: Theſe Enquirys are vain and abſurd: they look and inſinuate, as if the *Metaphyſical* Nature were different from the *Real*, and that the *Son* had a *diſtinct* Being from the *Father*, whereas we know not any thing of the *Metaphyſical* Nature of GOD, nor of the Divine *Being*, as He is in *Himſelf*: There is truly no ſuch thing as a *Metaphyſical* Nature, and the *Term* referreth not to the *Nature* of any *thing* it ſelf, but to ſome *peculiar* way of conceiving, and expreſſing it. The Scriptures have taught us to conceive and expreſs the *Perſonal* Subſiſtence of the *Son* and the

the *Holy Ghost* by the *Terms Begotten* and *Proceeding*, and from thence we learn, that *Father* is of *None*, that the *Son* is of the *Father* the *Eternal Word*, the *Only Begotten*: That the *Holy Ghost* is of the *Father* and the *Son*, as *proceeding* from, and sent by the *Father*, and the *Son*: This is not a *Metaphysical* Nature, nor a *Metaphysical* Manner; we believe the *Son* is the Begotten of the *Father*, but we presume not to determine in what Manner *He* is *Begotten*. This is altogether *unknown* and *incomprehensible*, and when we venture beyond *Revelation*, and those Conceptions God hath given us of *Himself* in the Scriptures, we plunge our selves in an unfathomable Abyss: we talk consequently in the dark, and determine erroneously and presumptuously upon those great and tremendous *Mysterys* which are *reverently* to be believed and adored, not *lightly* to be tossed up and down upon the *Tongues* and *Pens* of perverse *Disputers*, nor canvassed, and sifted by Scholastic Subtiltys, and prophane Oppositions.

While our *Adversarys* charge us with these Subtiltys, and cry out, that we support our Cause by a train of *Metaphysical* Terms and *abstracted* Notions, they do themselves retire to those dark Retreats, and cover themselves under a Cloud of Obscure and Ambiguous Expressions. All their Arguments against the plain and obvious sense of the Scriptures, and the *Catholic* Doctrine built thereupon, are nothing but a shew of *Criticism* and *Philosophy* worked up and refined into *Metaphysical* Speculations: On the other hand we do not go about to establish the

Catholic Faith by *Metaphysical* Conclusions, or *Idiomatical* Observations: We are contented to defend it against the *Argumentations* of those, who presume to enter into and comprehend the *Manner* of the *Divine* Existence, to define what is *possible*, or *impossible* with respect to GOD, and argue, as if *Existence* were the *same* in the *Creator* and the *Creature*; That is from the *Propertys* of *Created* Being they argue to *Uncreated*, and apply the *Terms* of *Number*, *Species* and *Individuation* in the *same* manner to *one* as the *other*. This we do earnestly oppose, nor do we take upon us haughtily to pronounce, that *what* is *revealed* in *Fact*, is *impossible* in *Nature*. So far, as *Metaphysical* Considerations bear any *Analogy* or Correspondence to Divine *Revelation*, we may apply them, as we do other *substituted* Terms to help us in our *Conceptions* of the *Divine Being*, not to speak *Him* as *He is*, but as according to our best Notions of *Existence*, *Being*, *Substance*, and *Essence*, we are enabled by the Assistance of his own *Revelation* in some measure to apprehend *Him*; and therefore I have chosen to refer my self to *those three* Conceptions, which we necessarily form of the Divine *Nature*: The *Unity*, *Indivisibility* and *Eternity*, as a *Rule*, to which all, that is *revealed* concerning the *One* GOD must be reduced, and then interpreted agreably and consistently with it.

It is my Purpose therefore in the remainder of this *Discourse* to apply this *Rule* more exactly, not upon the *Principles* of *Philosophy*, but on the surer *Evidence* of Scripture, and by that

Light

Light to consider the Distinction of the *Persons* with regard *to*, and as consistent *with* the *Unity*, *Indivisibility*, and *Eternity* of *Essence*.

The Distinction of the *Persons* manifestly appeareth from the *Offices* and *Operations* ascribed to *Each*: The *Unity*, *Indivisibility*, and *Eternity* from our first Conceptions of the Divine *Nature* as declared in the Scripture. I shall not therefore trouble you with any *Metaphysical* or Scholastical Notions in settling the *meaning* and *application* of these Words: *Eternity* I have spoken of before, and shall only add upon this consideration of it, that perhaps it is not to be *defined*, as certainly it is not, *as it is in it self*, because so it is not to be *conceived*; and when we have stretched it *backwards* and *forwards* infinitely beyond all *Time*, we cannot speak of it, but in the *Language* of *Time*; but this we may assuredly lay down, that whatever way of speaking giveth us *any* the most *distant* Notion of a *Beginning* to *exist*, or to *Be*, *such* a *Notion* is as full a Contradiction to, and Denyal of *Eternity*, as any thing, that was made, and began to *exist* in *Time*, can be. *Unity* is opposed to *Number*, and *Indivisibility* to all *compound*, and *extended Beings*: *Unity* expresseth the Singularity, *Indivisibility* the most absolute Simplicity of *Being*, and the *one* doth necessarily suppose and infer the *other*: For God is *One* in the strictest Notion of *Unity* against all *Multiplication*, so as *besides Him there is no* God; He is *so One*, as to suffer no Division, and He is *ever One*, and so *Eternal*: When in this *Unity* we consider the Divinity and Distinction of the *Persons*, if we

cannot comprehend the manner, it is no *Reproach* to our Underſtanding, that we cannot by our Rules of reaſouing account for all the Myſterys of the God-Head, of which we can know *no more*, nor *any further*, than *what* is *revealed.*

And even here we are not left to collect this *Unity*, *Indiviſibility*, and *Eternity* from the Conceptions we muſt neceſſarily have, whenever we in applying our Thoughts to this great Subject do think *truly* upon it; but the ſame Scriptures, which diſcover the Relation and Diſtinction of the *Perſons*, aſſert alſo the Unity of *Eſſence*, and do therefore conſtantly ſpeak of the *Son* and the *Holy Ghoſt* as ever poſſeſſed of the *entire* Divine *Nature* and *Attributes*, which are *truly* and *totaly communicated*, but can never be *divided.* They are therefore *diſtinct Perſons*, tho' not *ſeparate Beings.* From hence I would obſerve by the Way, that *Being* and *Perſon* in this *Revelation* are not *reciprocal* Terms, as if every Diſtinct *Perſon* were a Diſtinct *Being* alſo. It is ſo indeed in *Human* Nature, but for that reaſon it cannot be ſo in the *Divine*; For the *Divine* Nature is not like the *Angelical*, or *Human*, a *Species* conſiſting of *Individuals*, and therein therefore, if there be any Diſtinction of *Perſons*, it muſt be *conſiſtent* with the Unity of *Eſſence.*

In this *Argument* the *Principles* of *Reaſon* aſſent to the *Voice* of *Revelation* ſo far, as *Reaſon* can form any Concluſions upon it. For as *Reaſon* aſſenteth, that where the *Divine Nature*, *Appellations*, and *Attributes* are aſcribed, there

God

God is truly declared, *Reason* also concludeth, that however the *Persons revealed* are *distinct*, the *Essence* is *One* and the *same*, and that tho' the *Persons* are *revealed* to be *Three*, there is *none other* God *but One*. And therefore as I have proposed these great Truths both according to *Reason*, and to *Revelation* entirely consonant to *Reason*, I shall now consider the *Unity* and *Distinction* in another *series* of *Facts*, as they are delivered in the Scriptures.

For tho' possibly it might be conceded that the *Eternal Son* is *One* with the *Father*, yet it is harder to conceive that the *Son Incarnate* is *One* in Unity of *Essence* with the *Father*: The *Incarnation*, *poor Estate* and *sufferings* of our *Lord* have always been the great *Rock* of *Offence*. [a] *Christ crucified is still to the Jews a stumbling Block, and to the Greeks Foolishness.* But supposing the *Son* in his *Divine* Nature to be *ever One* with the *Father*, the *addition* of the *Human* to his *Person encreaseth* the *Mystery* indeed, but cannot *dissolve* the *Unity*: and all other Objections from the *Poverty*, *Sufferings*, and *Death* of *Christ* would cease, if they duely considered the *two Natures united* in his *Person*, and what is spoken of *Him* in Scripture under the *several* and *joint* Characters of God and *Man*. The *Natures* being *distinct*, and the *Person* the same, some Actions flow from *one Nature*, and *some* from the *other*, and *some* from *both*: *some* are *proper* to the *Humanity*, some *peculiar* to the *Divinity*, and *some* to his *gracious* and *merciful Operation* both as God

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[a] 1 Cor. I. 23.

and

and *Man.* We must therefore carefuly distinguish *what* is said of *both* Natures severaly considered, and *what* is said of the *whole Person*, in whom both *Natures* are *united.* The Actions *proper* to *each* are indifferently applied to *Christ Jesus*, and *those* things are said of the *Son* of *Man*, which are only *true* of the *Son* of God, but therefore *true* of *Christ Jesus*, because in his *One Person He* is both God and *Man*; And so the Beautiful *Constraft* is *unravelled*, and the Difficultys rising from the Different Natures are *reconciled*: With respect to his *Divine* Nature *Christ* is the *Lord of Glory*, with respect to his *Human He suffered* and *died*, and because both *Natures* meet and are united in his *Person*, the *Apostle* speaketh *properly*, when in this Chapter of the *Text* concerning the *Princes of this World* both *Jews* and *Gentile*, he saith, that if [a] *they had known the Wisdom of* God *in Christ Jesus, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.*

As *Man* he is said to have *redeemed us unto* God *by his Blood*: and thus *redeemed* we are the [b] *Church of* God, *which He hath purchased with his own Blood.* The *Propertys* of each *Nature* remain *separate*, the *Actions* of *each* as derived from the *same Person* are *indifferently* affirmed of *either.* In some Instances *one Nature* operateth *alone*, in *others both Natures* are joyned in the *Action* as well as the *Person*: with reference to his *Human* Nature as [c] *concerning the Flesh Christ came of the Fathers*, with respect to his *Divine* Nature *He is over all* God *blessed for ever. Amen.* In

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[a] 1 Cor. II. 7. [b] Acts XX. 28. [c] Rom. IX. 5.

his

his *Divine* Nature *He* is the [a] *Creator* and *Upholder* of all things: in his *Human* He *hungered* and *thirsted*, and *suffered* and *died*: In *Both* He is our *Mediator*, and hath obtained *Eternal Redemption for us*: As *Man* he *sheddeth his Blood for our sins*: as GOD *He saveth us*. In his *Human* Nature He payeth down the *Price*;; by his *Divine* he raiseth it to an *Inestimable Value*. As our *Mediator* and *Redeemer* He is possessed of *both* Natures, but the *Person* is the *same*, for tho' the *Natures* be *two*, there is but [b] *One Mediator between* GOD *and Man the Man Christ Jesus*.

By this Method all that is said of *Christ* is perfectly agreable and Consistent, and this plain and obvious Interpretation reconcileth all seeming Contrarietys: What is said of the *Son of Man* is possibly the main ground of all Opposition to his *Divinity*, and the Reason of those several *Hypotheses*, upon which the *Natures* are *confounded*, the Unity of his *Person denyed*, by which his *Divinity* is explained away, and his *Satisfaction disowned*, and his *Essential Unity* with the *Father*, and the *Holy Spirit* so many ways disputed, and either in *plain* Terms, or by *plain* Consequence so flatly contradicted. But this *Interpretation* answereth every different Scheme, whether it be the *Arian*, *Nestorian*, or *Eutychian*, or any other derived from them, or from which they have been derived, and our Blessed *Lord*'s having assumed the *Human* Nature into the *Divine*, *marketh* out indeed the *Per-*

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a Hebr. I. 2, 3 b 1 Tim. II. 9.

son,

Son, but doth not at all *impeach* the Unity of his *Eſſence*. And ſo I proceed to this point of the *Unity* before us, relating to our *Lord* with the *Human Nature* now aſſumed into the *Divine*.

If therefore we can clear the *Unity* of *Eſſence* with reſpect to our *Lord*, we ſhall eaſily anſwer all other Objections to every part of that *Revelation*, which relates to the great Work of our *Redemption*: What therefore our *Adverſarys* make an *Objection*, while they argue againſt the *Divinity* of our *Lord* from thoſe *Texts* which have a reſpect to his *Humanity*, I ſhall urge as a *Proof* both of the *Diſtinction* of the *Perſons* from the Conſideration of his *Humanity*, and of the *Unity* of *Eſſence* from the Conſideration of his *Divinity*. And to this purpoſe I do plead,

That even to our Apprehenſion there can be no ſtronger Argument of the real Diſtinction of the *Son* from the *Father*, than the *Incarnation* of our *Lord*: The *Myſtery* is *inexplicable*, the *Fact* is *undeniable*: We cannot ſay that the *Human* Nature cannot be joyned unto, and taken into the *Divine*: for tho' the *Divine* Nature will ſuffer no *Diviſion*, yet it will admit, as of *Perſonality*, ſo of the *Aſſumption* of *another* Nature into that *Perſonality*. Our Ignorance: the Limitation and Weakneſs of our Reaſon can be no adequate *Rule* of *what* is *poſſible* and *impoſſible* with reference to the *Divine Subſiſtence*.

The *Son incarnate* therefore is a *diſtinct Perſon* from the *Father*; and as the *Incarnation* was effected by the *Holy Ghoſt*, as for that reaſon

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He is also called the Son of God, here is a Distinction of the *Son* from the *Holy Ghost*, as well as from the *Father*. Still the *Persons* are *distinct*: the *Essence* is the *same*: and with regard to the *Son* especialy, as in the *Eternal Generation* the *Substance* is not *multiplied*; in the *Temporal* the *Person* is more visibly *distinguished*.

That the *Son* had an *Existence* before *He* was born of the *Virgin*, the *Arians* allow, and the *Socinians* are not to be regarded in the contrary Opinion, since they do offer such manifest Violence to the *Scripture*, and give us so notorious an Instance how the whole Stream and Tenour of the plainest Declarations may be turned into direct contrary Assertions: They ought to shew, that they have some previous Grounds to conclude against it either from the *Nature* of the Thing, or other *Declarations* relating to it, before they take upon them to bend the Scriptures to their Conceits: They should be able to evince that the *Pre-existence* of the *Son* is *impossible* in it self, and that our *Interpretations* are *contrary* to all *Rules* of *Construction*: and at last they must be able to prove the *Negative*, that our Lord had no *Existence* before his *Incarnation*.

Allowing the *Pre-existence* then, the Question with the *Arians* is whether it be *Temporal* or *Eternal*. I know, they will not call it in *Time*, and yet they will not own it to be *Eternal*; But in this they only impose upon the World and themselves; For tho' it be not *Temporal* or in *Time* with regard to the *Creation* of the *World*, but *millions* of Ages in any undetermined

mined point of Duration before, yet if it *ever* had a *Beginning*, that is *Tantamount* to what we call *Time*, and the very ſame thing, as if *He* had been *created* in *Time*.

But the Scriptures give us no Intimation of any ſuch diſtant undetermined Production, much leſs of any Production in *Time*, but ſpeak plainly of his *Eternal Exiſtence* even in thoſe *Texts* which the *Arians* moſt confidently advance againſt it. Such as in the *Proverbs*; [a] *The Lord poſſeſſed me*, according to the *Septuagint*, *created me in the beginning of his Ways*: and that of the ſecond *Pſalm*; [b] *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee.* For as to the Word [created] in the *Proverbs*, beſides the *Propriety* of the *Original* oppoſed to one ſingle *Tranſlation*, and beſides the *Probability* of a *various Lection* from the *Greek* Verb, which ſignifieth to *poſſeſs*; the word [created] is often uſed where a *Natural production* or *Generation* is intended, and even here it is explained, [c] *Before the Hills was I brought forth*, [d] *I was ſet up or anointed from Everlaſting.* As to the *Forms* of ſpeaking I have obſerved elſewhere, that we cannot ſpeak of *Eternity* but in the *Language* of *Time*. In that way of ſpeaking what is ſaid to be in the *Beginning* without a *Connotation* of ſome *ſpecial Time* is underſtood to be from *Everlaſting*. Thus when we read, [e] *In the Beginning* God *created the Heaven, and the Earth*, this denoteth the *Beginning* of *Time* to us, or that *Æra*, which commenced

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a Prov. VIII. 22. *b* Pſalm II. 7. *c* Prov. VIII. 25. *d* v. 23. *e* Gen. I. 1

at

at the *Creation*; and when we read, [a] *In the Beginning was the* WORD, the following Clauſes ſhew, that as no *Time* is denoted, the *meaning* is from *Everlaſting*. [b] For the WORD *was with* GOD, and the WORD *was* GOD. [b] *The ſame was in the Beginning with* GOD. The like may be ſaid with reference to that other Expreſſion. [c] *This day have I begotten Thee*: where without any *Connotation* of *Time*, or *reference* to any *manifeſtation* of *Him* to the World, *Eternity* is ſignified, and the Expreſſion is moſt proper to point out that great and Incomprehenſible INSTANT, which doth ever ſubſiſt, and never paſſeth away, and proceedeth moſt aptly from the Mouth of GOD, with whom a [d] *Thouſand*, even innumerable Thouſands of *Years are but as one Day*, and is fitly applied to *Him*, who is the [e] *ſame Yeſterday and to Day, and for Ever*. Where any *Time* is *pointed out* by this *Expreſſion*, the *day* alſo is *aſcertained*, as where the *Apoſtle* applieth it to the [f] *Prieſtly Office*, and to the [g] *Reſurrection of our Lord*: but without any *Time* ſpecified, it ſetteth forth his [h] *Eternal Generation* as in the *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews*, the firſt Chapter, where of this *Brightneſs* of his *Father's Glory*, and *expreſs* Character of *his Perſon* it is ſaid by way of ſuperiority to the moſt glorious Creatures, [i] *Unto which of the Angels ſaid He at any Time, Thou art my Son this day have I begotten Thee.*

In Oppoſition to all this, if it be urged that in the *Epiſtle* to the *Coloſſions* He is called

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a John I. 1. *b* v. 2. *c* Pſal. II. 7. *d* 2 Pet. III. 8. *e* Heb. XIII. 8. *f* V. 3. *g* Acts XIII. 33. *h* Heb. I. 2, 3. *i* v. 5.

[2] *the*

[a] *the First-born of every Creature*, I answer, that therefore *He is not a Creature*: there is a wide difference between being *born*, and being *created*: and the *First-born* of every *Creature* signifieth his *Birth before* all *Creation*. [b] For by *Him* were all things *created*: And it may signify also his *Dominion*, and especialy his *Sovereigty* over the *Church*, as afterwards and in other places it doth; Thus it signifieth his *Dominion*, for *as his First-born*, the *Father* maketh [c] *Him higher, than the Kings of the Earth*, and *giveth Him* [d] *the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the utmost parts of the Earth for his Possession*: Thus also his Sovereignty over the Church, as He is *the* [e] *Head of the Body the Church*: who is the [f] *Beginning*, the *Chief*, the *First-born from the Dead*, that *in all things He might have the Preeminence*: but at the *fifteenth* verse it signifieth his *uncreated Existence* before any thing was *Created*, *He* being *Himself* the *Creator* of all things: after all the *Place* in the *Proverbs* answereth for it self, For it is *Wisdom*, the *Wisdom* or *Word* of God that *speaketh*, and not as an *Attribute*, but *Personaly*, and the *Word* or *Wisdom* of God *cannot* be *created*: The *Wisdom* is *doubtless Co-eternal* with, because *necessarily included* in the *Divine Essence. Ever One with the Father.*

These *Difficultys* removed, what the *Scriptures* have delivered concerning the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost* is an *Unity* and *Eternity* of *Essence* with the *Father*, depending upon this necessary

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a Col. I. 15. *b* v. 16. *c* Ps. LXXXIX. 28. *d* II. 8. *e* Eph. II. 22, 23. *f* Col. I. 18.

Affection

Affection of the *Divine Nature*: that it is *Indivisible*, and that it is *One*. The *Principles* of *Human* Reason, so far as they constrain our *Assent* to the *Being* of a God, *constrain it* equaly to the *Unity* of *Essence* also.

When therefore we hear the *Scriptures* speak according to the true *Conception* and *Conviction* of our *Reason*, and still preserve the *Unity* of the *Divine Essence* while they reveal unto us the *Father*, and the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*, we have *such* an *Authority*, *such* a *Direction* for *understanding* and *interpreting* this *Revelation*, as must be highly satisfactory to us; when the *keeping* to this *Analogy* of *Faith* maketh every *Article agreable*, and *consistent*, and the *departing* from it leadeth into manifold *Error*, *Contradiction* and *Impossibility*. The *Plurality* of *Persons* is a *Point* of pure *Revelation*: The *Unity* of *Essence* is no *Metaphysical* strain or *subtilty*, but the plain unavoidable *Dictate* of *Reason*, and therefore tho' there be *Three Persons*, there is but *One* God, because there is but *One Divine Essence*: and this Doctrine of the *Unity* of the *Divine Nature* is the Doctrine of *Revelation* as well as *Reason*, and therefore a *Plurality* of Persons must be consistent with it.

If *Reason* can assure us of any thing besides the *Existence* of God, it must assure us of the *Unity*, and therefore *that* Knowledge is most highly reasonable, which in disclosing *Three Divine Persons* discloseth *them* subsisting according to their several *Relations* and *Propertys* in in *One* and the *same Eternal Essence*, and constantly

ſtantly aſſerteth their *Unity*, that theſe [a] *Three are One.*

Altho' I uſe the Words of St *John*'s firſt *Epiſtle*, I do not lay the *ſtreſs* of *this* Doctrine upon *them*: however the *whole Paſſage* is *controverted*, *theſe Words* themſelves by many *concurrent Teſtimonys* have a *peculiar Authority*; there is great reaſon to conclude, they were *read* in the *Original Text*, and are a *genuin* part of it, and, notwithſtanding they appear not in the *later Copys*, it is highly probable the whole verſe was found in the old *Vatican Exemplar*, upon which the *Complutenſian* Edition was chiefly formed *: The *Clauſe*, I refer to, containeth the *ſum* and *ſubſtance* of the *Scripture* Doctrine of the *Trinity*, which cannot be expreſſed in *fewer* or *clearer* Words; But it is not my purpoſe to digreſs into the Diſpute of that celebrated paſſage, and I ſhall prove the *Unity* as applied to the Ever Bleſſed *Trinity* from *other* places. And firſt,

1. The *Unity* of the *Father* and the *Son* as Ever in the *Divine*, Now in the *Human* Nature added.

The *Son* is called by St *John* [b] *the only begotten Son*, *which is in the Boſom of the Father*, even while *He* was upon *Earth*, He is in the *Boſom of the Father*: of the *ſame Divine Eſſence*, ſtill *one with the Father*, after *He* had taken *our Nature upon Him*: He doth *ſubſiſt* then in the ſame *Ef-*

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[a] 1 John V. 7. * See the preſent Bp of *Lichfield*'s Excellent Letter to the moſt learned Dr *Bentley* on this Subject. [b] John I. 18.

ſence

sence with the *Father*, *ever begotten* by *Him*, and ever *indivisible* from *Him*, according to his own Declaration made to *Nicodemus*, [a] *No man hath ascended up to Heaven, but He that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in Heaven.* Tho' *Now* on *Earth*, yet *still* indivisibly *One* in *Heaven* with the *Father*: The *Son of Man* is said to come down from *Heaven*, because the *Son* of GOD came down, and *took* our *Nature* upon *Him* and *united* it in his *Own Person*, and for the same Reason, tho', as yet his *Human* Nature had *not* been in *Heaven*, yet forasmuch, as it was *now united* to his *Divine* Nature, He calleth Himself the *Son of Man, which is in Heaven*: Tho' the *Natures* are *Diverse*, the *Person* is the *same*: *He is not two, but one* CHRIST: and with reference to the *Father*, the *Persons* are *distinct*, the *Essence* is the *same*. For tho', as *He* is the *Son of Man*, He acknowledgeth, [b] *My Father is greater than I*, yet, as He is the *Eternal Son* of GOD He averreth, [c] *I and my Father are One*: well understood by the *Jews*, who *took up stones again to stone Him*, for *Blasphemy*, as they told Him, [d] *because that thou being a Man makest thy self* GOD, as for the same reason they had *taken up* [e] *stones* before *to cast at Him*: and it appeareth from the second Occasion, that for Him to say, *I and my Father are One*, and to say [f] *I am the Son of* GOD are Expressions of the same Equivalence, *so* explained by Himself, and *so* understood by the *Jews*; This is an unan-

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a John III. 13. *b* XIV. 28. *c* X. 30. *d* v. 33. *e* VIII. 59. *f* X. 36.

ſwerable Argument, and ſhoweth in the ſtrongeſt and cloſeſt Terms, that the *Son* and the *Father are One*: of the *ſame Subſtance*, *Power*, and *Eternity* according to that plain and poſitive Aſſertion, [a] *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, Before Abraham was I AM.* And no wonder, they charged Him with *Blaſphemy*, and went about to ſtone Him, when we find before this, that they underſtood, that *to* [b] *call* GOD *his Father was to make himſelf equal with* GOD, Then the *Jews ſought the more to kill him, becauſe he had not only broken the Sabbath, but ſaid alſo, that* GOD *was his Father, making himſelf equal with* GOD; So that the Doctrine of the *Jewiſh Church* for the *Unity* and *Co equality* of the *Son* with the *Father* is clear, the *Unity* being by them included in the *Equality*; and ſo they underſtood his Aſſertion of his *Unity*, or *being one with the Father*, as is before obſerved: For tho' *Equality* in Men ſuppoſeth no *Unity*, in GOD it expreſſeth the *greateſt*. For to be *equal with* GOD, and *to be* GOD is the *ſame* thing.

This *Unity* Himſelf expreſſeth at other times by his *Dwelling* and *Being in the Father*, and *the Father in Him*, anſwerable to his Being *in the Boſom of the Father*. This the later *Greek* Writers called περιχώρησις, underſtanding by it the *Mutual Indwelling* of the *Father* and the *Son*, as *exiſting* in *Each other* by an Inſeparable *Unity* of *Nature*: In this however they only expreſſed the *ſenſe* of the *Ancient Church*, which, without uſing the *Word*, did *this way* explain theſe Ex-

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a John VIII. 58. *b* V. 18.

preſſions

preſſions of our *Saviour*: and they *extended it* alſo to the *Holy Ghoſt* of the ſame *Eſſence* with the *Father* and the *Son*. This our *Bleſſed Lord* firſt allegeth as Explanatory of what He had ſaid at the *thirtieth* Verſe, *I and my Father are One*, appealing to his Works [a] *That the Father is in Him*, and *He in the Father*: Therefore they ſought again to take Him, for re-aſſerting in thoſe Words what He had aſſerted before: *I and my Father are One*. Thus likewiſe in Conſequence of this In-dwelling our *Lord* [b] telleth *Philip*, who demanded of Him, *Lord, ſhew us the Father, he that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father, and how ſaiſt thou, ſhew us the Father? Believeſt thou not, that I am in the Father and the Father in me?* and for this He appealeth to the *Words*, which He ſpeaketh, and to the *Works*, that He doth: [c] *The Words, that I ſpeak unto you, I ſpeak not of my ſelf: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, He doth the Works*: and this miraculous *Evidence* He therefore urgeth in the moſt earneſt manner, [d] *Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or elſe believe me for the very Works ſake*: this is the only way of *ſeeing the Father* in his *Words* and in his *Works*: in his *Words*, for our *Lord ſpeaketh not of Himſelf*: in his *Works*, which the *Son* worketh *jointly* with the *Father*, in this *mutual In-dwelling* and *Unity* with the Father: [e] *my Father worketh hitherto, and I work*: and then in Juſtification of his calling God his Father, and to aſſert his *Equality* in *Honour* and *Eſſence* with the *Father*, He ad-

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a John X. 38. *b* XIV. 8, 9, 10. *c* v. 10. *d* v. 11. *e* V. 17.

deth, [a] *The Son can do Nothing of Himself*, that is without the Father, becauſe of this moſt *intimate Unity*: *The Son can do nothing of Himſelf, but what he ſeeth the Father do: for what things ſoever He doth, theſe alſo doth the Son likewiſe.* For Inſtance, [b] *As the Father raiſeth up the Dead, and quickneth them: even ſo the Son quickneth whom he will*; and *Judgment* is committed more peculiarly to Him, that becauſe of this *Unity* of *Action*, and *Prerogative* of *Juſtice* [c] *All men ſhould honour the Son even as they honour the Father.* Appoſitely to the whole and according to the *Teſtimony* of the *Baptiſt*, [d] *No Man hath ſeen* God *at any time*; *the Only begotten Son, which is in the Boſom of the Father, He hath declared Him*, by his *Word*, and by his *Works* from the *Creation* unto the *Redemption* of the World: and thus only it is, that *he that hath ſeen the Son hath ſeen the Father alſo, who dwelleth in the Son*, as *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghoſt dwell mutualy* in *each other*, by a ſort of *Commenſurate Circumſcription* and *Circumambiency*, as it were, *containing each other*, *whom* all the *Univerſe* cannot *contain.*

Thus is the *Father* and the *Son* Eſſentialy *united*, and *ſo* is the *Holy Spirit* with *them*, even with the *Son*, as well as the *Father*, even with the *Son* Now ſubſiſting in his *double* Nature, and therefore *diſtinct*, as I ſaid before, from *Both*, as *Each* in his *Perſon* is from *Other.*

This *Holy Spirit* is called the *Comforter*, to denote his *Office*, and *another Comforter*, to denote more particularly the *Diſtinction* of his

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a John V. 19. *b* v. 21. *c* v. 22, 23. *d* I. 18.

Per-

Person from the *Father* and the *Son*: in those Heavenly Discourses with his *Disciples* our Blessed *Lord* calleth Him *another Comforter*, for Himself was at that time their *Comforter* upon Earth, and is *now* our *Advocate* in Heaven: but the *Holy Ghost* is *now* our *Comforter unto the End of the World.* [a] *I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you for ever.* Again, [b] *The Comforter (which is the Holy Ghost) whom the Father will send in my Name*: and in the next *Chapter*, [c] *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father*, He *shall testify of me.* The *Holy Ghost* therefore, that *other Comforter*, whom the *Father* will *give*, whom the *Father* will *send* in his *Son*'s *Name*, whom the *Son* will *send* unto them from the *Father*, is essentialy *united* to *Both*, and *distinguished* also from *Both*, *proceeding* from, and being *sent* by the *Father* and the *Son.*

This sheweth the *Unity* is not *altered* by the *Incarnation* of *Christ*, and that the *Scriptures* speak properly according to the *Indivisibility* of the *Divine Essence*: and so the *Holy Ghost* likewise *proceedeth ever*, without being *separated* from the *Father* and the *Son*: This sheweth also the *Distinction* of Persons in the *Unity*, especialy as it is declared by our *Lord* now He had taken our *Nature* upon *Him*: For He alone being the *Person incarnate*, the *Distinction* is hereby *more* manifest: of Him from the *Father* and the *Holy Spirit*, and of the *Holy Spirit* from the *Father*

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[a] John XIV. 16. [b] v. 26. [c] XV. 26.

and Him; for He that is ſent by the *Father* and the *Son* muſt be diſtinct in *Perſon* from *Both*: This *Diſtinction* I may ſum up in *thoſe* Words of our *Lord* to his *Diſciples*, when *ſorrow had filled their hearts*, becauſe he had told them of his Departure from them. [a] *Nevertheleſs I tell you the Truth*: *It is expedient for you that I go away*: *for if I go not away, the Comforter will not not come unto you; but if I depart, I will ſend Him unto you.* This *Comforter*, this *other Comforter*, which is the *Holy Ghoſt*, the *Spirit of Truth*: the *Spirit* of *Chriſt* and of GOD, muſt, tho' *diſtinct* in *Perſon*, be moſt intimately *united* to *Both*. And if any thing more be requiſite, I may refer to the former Deductions of theſe Points, as they are placed in another View, to ſhew that the *Scriptures* ſpeak ſometimes *Eſſentialy* and ſometimes *Perſonaly*, by the *one* expreſſing the *Unity*, by the *other* ſetting forth the *Diſtinction*. I ſhall only add, that having mentioned the *eighth Chapter* to the *Romans* to prove the *Omniſcience* of the *Holy Spirit* in that He [b] *maketh Interceſſion for us*, I may here produce it again to prove the *Unity* of his *Eſſence*, and the *Diſtinction* of his *Perſon*: in that paſſage both the *Father* and the *Son* are contained, and the *Spirit* is expreſly named: *For we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought; but the Spirit it ſelf maketh Interceſſion for us.* [c] And He, our *Mediator*, that *ſearcheth the hearts, knoweth what is in the Mind of the Spirit, becauſe he maketh Interceſſion for us according to the Will of* GOD: or

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a John XVI. 6, 7. *b* Rom. VIII. 26. *c* v. 27.

rather

rather *maketh Interceſſion unto* GOD *for us*. This is ſpoken of *Chriſt*, and it is more peculiarly his *Office*, ſeeing [a] *He ever liveth to make Interceſſion for us*. *Chriſt* is ſaid ἐντυγχάνειν to *intercede*, the *Spirit* is ſaid ὑπερεντυγχάνειν, over and above to *intercede* by his *ſupervening* Grace with *thoſe Groanings* of a Pious Soul, *which cannot be uttered*. We know no Union more intimate, than that of the *ſpirit of a Man, that is in him*; but this expreſſeth not (hardly in any reſemblance) the *Divine Unity*. For the Spirit of a Man is of a quite different Nature from the Body, and *ſeparable* from it: As yet it is intimately *united* in our Bleſſed Saviour only, and will then only be *inſeparably united* to us at the *Reſurrection* of the *Dead*: But in the *Divine* Nature the *Unity* is *Eternal*, as the *Subſtance* is *Indiviſible*. In us there is only an *union*: in the *Divine* Nature alone there is *unity*. In the Conjunction of Soul and Body there is only an *uniting* of *different Subſtances* in the *ſame Perſon*. In GOD *alone*, notwithſtanding the *Diſtinction* of *Perſons*, the *Unity* is *Eſſential*, *Eternal*, *Subſtantial*, *Indiviſible*. With reference to the *Son* the *Unity* is evident with reſpect to his *Eternal* Nature; and this *Unity* is not *diſſolved*, but his *Perſon* more *diſtinguiſhed* by his *Human*; with reference to the *Holy Ghoſt* the *Unity* is alſo *evident*, and the *Diſtinction* clear to all thoſe, who have ſo much as heard, and do upon that hearing believe, [b] *that there is any Holy Ghoſt*.

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a Hebr. VII. 25. *b* Acts XIX. 2.

This

This is then that *Analogy* of *Faith* which is to guide us in understanding and interpreting the *Language* of *Revelation*: the Unity of the GOD-*Head*, or that there is none other GOD, but *One*, is the great Fundamental *Article* of *Reason* and *Revelation*: but when we find this *One* GOD declared under the several Distinctions of *Relation* and *Office*, and still the Unity asserted, even in the most manifest Distinction, even in *that* of the *Son incarnate*, we do acknowledge a Plurality of *Persons* in the Unity of *Essence*, and at the same time avoid all Errors and Absurditys of *more* GOD's *than One*, and of Nominal and Inferior *Gods*, and of ascribing the *Divine Name*, *Attributes* and *Worship* to a *Creature*.

That the Unity of the GOD-*Head* is according to the *Scriptures* consistent with a *Plurality* of *Persons*, is evident from hence, that the *Persons* revealed are truly Distinct, while the *Name*, *Attributes*, and *Worship* of the *One* GOD are equaly ascribed unto them; and however Men may dispute concerning the Application of the *Name* and *Worship*, as that the *Name* is *Titular*, and the *Worship subordinate*, they can make no Dispute, where the *Attributes* are equaly *ascribed*: For the *Attributes* are the *Essence* of GOD, and if we pretend to have any Conception of *Essence* without *Attributes*, this is nothing but an *Abstract Metaphysical* consideration of *Essence* in general; but when we would conceive the *Divine Essence*, as *distinguished* from all other, we can conceive it in the *Divine Attributes* only; since then the *Divine Attributes* are ascribed to *Three Persons*, and the *Divine Essence* can be but

One,

One, it neceſſarily follows, that the *Three Perſons* muſt ſubſiſt in *One Eſſence*, according to the *Revelation* which diſcloſeth *Three Perſons*, and at the ſame time every where aſſerteth, and teacheth, that there is *none other* GOD, *but One*: And therefore as it is the great Deſign and Purpoſe of the *Scriptures* to aſſert the Unity of the GOD-*Head*, and thereby to inſtruct Men in the *true* Object of their *Faith*, *Worſhip* and *Obedience*, this Aſſertion of the *Unity* is not intended to *exclude*, but manifeſtly to *include* the *Son* and the *Holy Ghoſt* in the great *Object* of *Faith* and *Adoration*.

To prove that the Unity of the GOD-Head is inconſiſtent with a *Plurality* of *Perſons*, our *Adverſarys* have aſſerted, that *Perſon* and *Intelligent Agent* are *reciprocal Terms*, and that every *Perſon* is an *Individual*: Of *Perſonality* as applied to *Created* and *Uncreated Intelligences*, as alſo of *Perſon*, and *Being*, I have ſpoken already, but wherever the Objection falleth in, it is proper to reſume, and complete the Anſwer. I have obſerved already, that tho' we do not find *Perſonality* applied to any, but intelligent *Agents*, yet that it doth not conſiſt in that alone, and however it is true with reſpect to created *Intelligences*, whether Angels or Men, that *Perſon* and Intelligent *Agent* are the *ſame*, ſo as to conſtitute as many Individuals as there are Intelligent *Agents*, this is not true with reſpect to Uncreated *Intelligence*: Angels and Men are indeed ſo many Intelligent Beings, and ſo many Individuals making up their ſeveral *Species*: But GOD is not a *Species*, nor can admit of Individuals

duals any further, than in this Notion, that the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt* are individualy *One*: Diſtinct in Perſon according to their Relation and Agency, but *One* only in Subſtance, and Eſſence, and Attributes. The *Divine Being* may be called an *Individual*, in Contradiſtinction to all Created Beings, but His moſt Simple Unity excludeth all Notion of Individuals, or Plurality of *Beings*, tho' it admitteth a Plurality of *Perſons*. As to Internal Acts there there is but One *Will* in the *Divine* Nature: as to External, but One *Power* however exerciſed by the *Father*, by the *Son*, and by the *Holy Ghoſt*: Appropriate Acts are ſufficient to denominate a *Perſon*: The Unity of *Will* and the ſame Attributes and Power demonſtrate, or point out the Unity of *Eſſence*. The *Son* is a Diſtinct Perſon from the *Father*, but if He be not *One* with the *Father* in Will and Power and Eſſence, He is a different Being, and if a different Being He muſt be of a different Nature too: He cannot be the *Son*, as the *Son* is underſtood to poſſeſs the *whole* Nature of the *Father*, unleſs He be of the ſame Subſtance and *Attributes* with the *Father*. For Nature, which among Men is *ſpecific*, is ſo far the ſame as all Men are *partakers* of it, but with regard to God the *Eſſence* cannot be *multiplied* nor *divided* in the *Perſons* without being deſtroyed: The *Human* Nature as *Finite* is derived to all Mankind from the Beginning to the End of the World; but the *Divine* Nature, becauſe it is *Infinite*, cannot be *divided*, and therefore, if in the *Divine* Nature there is a Diſtinction of *Perſons*, there muſt needs

needs be an Unity of *Eſſence*: The ſame may be ſaid as to the Manner of Subſiſting in the ſame *Eſſence*, whereby the *Perſons* are Fundamentaly diſtinguiſhed, One as the *Father*, another as the *Son*, another as the *Holy Ghoſt*. The Manner we do not pretend to explain beyond what is Revealed: of the Facts we are aſſured, and the ſeveral *Adverſarys* of the *Faith* have run into their ſeveral *Hereſys* by endeavouring to explain it. They argue from Human Perſons and Human Exiſtence to *Divine*: from created Beings to uncreated Being, from Individuals among Men to the ſame in the *Divine* Nature, and they would argue right were it ſo, that becauſe Individuals are diſtinct Beings, and ſo many Intelligent Agents are ſo many Perſons, therefore in the *Divine* Nature there cannot be a Plurality of Perſons, becauſe there cannot be a Plurality of Beings, or Individuals. But let them firſt try to fix the Principle of *Individuation* even in created Beings, and demonſtrate, that *Perſons* muſt ſubſiſt after the way of Multiplication and Diviſion in the *Divine Nature*, as they do in the *Human*, and to ſhew, that it cannot be, as we are taught, and that it muſt be, as they ſay, and they may poſſibly be convinced that their Concluſions are as *Raſh* and *Blaſphemous*, as they are *Weak* and *Preſumptuous*. We are aſſured that Individuation, whatever it be in *created Subſtances*, cannot admit of Diviſion when applied to the *Divine Eſſence*, and when we are aſſured of the Unity ſo conſtantly taught in the *Scripture*, and that the *Perſons* there revealed are equaly *Divine*,

we

we do from the very *Principles* of *Reaſon* conclude, that *theſe Three are One.*

But this ſhould not ſeem ſo ſtrange to *thoſe* eſpecialy, who contend that the *Being* of a God may be proved *à Priori*, that is by ſomething, which we muſt conceive *diſtinct* from Him, and *antecedent* to Him. This, how groſs and contradictory ſoever it may ſeem, if ſtrictly underſtood, to *ſuppoſe ſomething before the Firſt*, will nevertheleſs ſerve to illuſtrate and reconcile the *Eternity* of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghoſt*, with the *Eternity* of the *Father*. For if the *Father* be *Eternal* in the moſt abſolute and proper ſenſe, notwithſtanding we are to conceive *ſomething before Him*, the *Son* is alſo *Eternal*, notwithſtanding in the Order of our Thoughts we do neceſſarily conceive the *Father before* Him. This is all, I ſuppoſe, that is meant or intended by the Celebrated Argument *à Priori*: Not that any *Neceſſity* actualy exiſted before God, but that in the order and train of our Thought we conceive a *Neceſſity* of *Exiſtence*, before we conceive the *Being*, that *exiſteth*: and then upon more *ſolid*, and not on this *imaginary* ground we ſay, that the *Eternity* of the *Son* and of the *Holy Ghoſt* is to our Apprehenſion altogether as conſiſtent with the Eternity of the *Father*, as is the Eternity of the *Father* with the *antecedent Neceſſity* of his *Exiſtence*. For the *Father* is an Actual Eternal Being, and cannot communicate his *Nature* without his *Eternity*. But this *Neceſſity* is no *Being*, and can give no Exiſtence: It is meerly a *ſuppoſition*, and one *Neceſſity* may ſuppoſe another without coming

coming at any End of ſuppoſing. I might enlarge upon this *Argument*, as it hath been lately ſtated to the World; but this is ſufficient to ſhew, how *properly* it may be *uſed* in Defence of the *Trinity*, ſince the Exiſtence of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghoſt*, as ſuch, is truly to be proved *à Priori*: the *Son* from the *Father*: the *Holy Ghoſt* from the *Father* and the *Son*, but becauſe of the Eternity, Indiviſibility and Unity of the *Divine* Nature, Both Co-eternal, and Co-equal with the *Father*.

The ſum amounts to this. The Scriptures have given us the moſt true and worthy Conceptions of the *Deity*, aſſerting the Unity and at the ſame time teaching us to adore the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt* under the *Name*, and with the *Worſhip* of the *One True* God, deriving the *Son* from the *Father* by way of an Eternal Generation, and the *Holy Ghoſt* from *Both* by way of Proceſſion, in a full Communication of the ſame Nature, and a perfect Unity of Eſſence, diſtinguiſhing them all along from each other by their ſeveral Offices, and Perſonal Operations. So that in their Common Nature we ſee the Order of *Relation*, and in their Offices and Operations we behold the outward Diſtinction of their *Perſons*; and by contemplating the Divine Oeconomy we have a view of the whole Proceſs, Agreement and Conſiſtency of this *Revelation* in all its parts from the firſt Declaration of the *One True* God to the fuller Diſcovery of Him in all his Tranſactions with *Mankind*, and eſpecialy in the *Redemption* of the *World*.

It

It is in this great Work, that the Divine *Order* and *Oeconomy* do principaly appear, and as the *Counsel* of God in this Purpose of our *Redemption* was more and more manifested, the *Offices* and *Distinction* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* were still more clearly discovered. That this great Work should be *carried* on and *accomplished* by *Three Persons* of an *Eternal* and *Co-equal Essence* is more, than we could pretend to *discover*: That it could be *accomplished* by *any* of the highest Rank of *created Beings* is more, than we could presume to *determine*: That is is *so accomplished*, as the *Church* teacheth us, the *Scriptures* do *declare*: That it could be effected *no other way*, we may *indubitably* conclude: That those who refuse it in *this* way, can obtain it in *no other*, we are *infallibly* certain.

To conclude therefore I shall address a short *Application* to our *Adversarys* and *ourselves*.

1. First it may be proper for our *Adversarys* and all *Opposers* of this *Doctrine* to reflect, and consider cooly with themselves whether they are at Liberty to believe in these Points, as they please? whether the *Arian* and *Socinian* are *equaly* safe upon their *several Schemes*, and He that *rejecteth* a *Revelation* hath the *same* Title to the *Favour* of God with Him, that *receiveth* it? These Questions are partly answered in the *fourth* of these Discourses, and I would rather leave any further Determination upon it to the inward Thoughts and Assurance of every Man, that thinketh of an Eternal State; But whatever is the *Event* to them, we may applaud and com-

comfort our ſelves with this ſtrong Conſolation, that taking the Propoſitions in the plain and obvious ſignification of the Words according to that *Analogy*, in which the *things of* GOD, not only the more *Myſterious*, as they are accounted, but even his *Attributes* are underſtood, we are *ſafe* at leaſt, unleſs a *Revelation* of a *Contrary*, or a *different* ſenſe be equaly *manifeſt*; and ſince all *difference* of *Faith* and *Opinion*, (if that may be called *Faith*, *which believeth not in the Name of the Son of* GOD) ariſeth *from departing* from *theſe Rules* of *Interpretation*, we have upon this Conſideration alſo a very ſtrong Preſumption, if referred to the Judgment of indifferent People only, and upon the ſtricteſt Laws of Reaſoning we have an *Indubitable* Certainty, that every *Scheme* ſo *differing* from *us*, and *each other* is *wrong*, as they are certainly ſo many different *Hypotheſes* invented to ſolve thoſe *Myſterious* Difficultys, which are confeſſedly above our *Comprehenſion*.

2. Our *Adverſarys* may do well to conſider what I intimated in the beginning of theſe Diſcourſes, that all their ſeveral *Schemes* tend to one Common *Point*, and like ſo many *Lines*, however *crookedly* drawn, *meet* at laſt in one common *Center*, equaly [a] *denying the Lord, that bought them*.

According to the beſt Judgment, I am able to form, they *terminate* in the *Mahometan*, or *Unitarian Scheme*, or elſe introduce *Polytheiſm* to the Scandal even of *Mahometans* themſelves.

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[a] 2 Pet. II. 1.

Let

Let the *Arians* particularly consider, that, if they do realy believe the *Divinity* of the *Son*, by denying Him to be of the very *Substance* of the *Father*, they make *two Gods*, or else, if they deny his *Divinity*, as most certainly they do, they are downright *Unitarians*. If any shall think it hard to rank the *Unitarians* with the *Mahometans* in this *Article* of God, let them shew the *Difference*, and it will fall on the *Mahometan* side, especialy with respect to the *Arians* and *Socinians*, who acknowledge and receive the *Scriptures*. *Unitarians*, that reject all *Revelation*, differ indeed from *Mahometans*, who receive a *strange sort* of *one*, that is they receive their *Doctrines* upon the *Pretence* of a *Revelation*; but so far as their *Scheme* is supported by them, they seem to approve the *Mahometan* Notions of the God-*Head*, and not to be displeased with their Alliance: However, as if it were of service to their Cause, we may remember, with what *Pomp* and *Approbation* we had *Mahometan Meditations* and *Devotions* recommended from that Quarter not many years since.

If the *Arians* and *Socinians* should seriously not suspect, that they are driving to the *Unitarian Scheme*, we may observe nevertheless, how they agree with them upon their several Plans to oppose the *Catholic* Doctrine, and all the while give *no opposition* to *one another*, unless it be, that some of the *warmer* and *more open* blame *others*, who are more *cautious* and *reserved*: if they do truly believe the Scriptures to be the *Word of* God, they may *compare* each

others

others Scheme with the *Scripture*, and if from thence they ſhould endeavour reciprocaly to confute their Oppoſite *Tenents*, and to overthrow each others *Platform*, they will diſcover whether their ſeveral ways of Interpretation will then ſerve to convince another, or to defend themſelves.

Mahometiſm it ſelf hath a mixture of *Chriſtianity*, and the Doctrine of a *Trinity* is not obſcurely traced in the Ancient *Philoſophy*: It is not *Platoniſm* brought into the *Church*, but it is an Ancient *Traditionary* Doctrine found in the oldeſt *Scriptures* and derived into their Writings. As delivered in the *Old Teſtament* and revealed more clearly in the *New*, the *Doctrine* is full and compleat every way anſwering the great End and gracious Purpoſes of *Almighty* God in the Diſplay of his *Attributes* and the *Redemption* of the *World*.

3. Let us, my Beloved *Brethren*, be ever, as we are *conſiſtent* with our ſelves, receiving the *Holy Scriptures* as the *Oracles* of God, interpreting and underſtanding them agreably to that *Analogy* of *Faith*, which *maketh* them of one Tenour and Conſiſtency from the *Beginning* to the *End*, in perfect and univerſal Agrement with the *Church* thro' all Ages from the *Apoſtles* unto *this* Day. The Fact hath been abundantly proved by the Labours of *Learned Men* both at *Home* and *Abroad*, but no where with more Learning and Glory, than by the True and Genuin Sons, both *Clergy* and *Laity* of this *Church* and *Nation*.

If we would perſevere in the *Faith*, and *keep that, which is committed to our Truſt*, we muſt, as

St *Paul* chargeth *Timothy*, we must [a] *avoid prophane bablings, and oppositions of Science falsely so called, which some professing have erred concerning the Faith*; since we are assured, that [b] *if any Man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome Words, even the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Doctrine, which is according to Godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing.*

The way therefore to this *Catholic* Agreement is to [c] *hold fast the form of sound words, and the* [d] *Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints*: If we observe these Instructions, and the rest, which St *Paul* especialy sent to several *Churches*, and gave particularly to *Timothy* and *Titus*, we shall [e] *know how to behave our selves in the House of* God, *which is the Church of the Living* God: *the Pillar and Ground of Truth.* [f] *And without Controversy great is the Mystery of Godliness*: God *was manifest in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the World, received up into Glory.*

And therefore unto God the *Son*, together with the *Father*, and the *Holy Ghost* be ascribed, as is most due all Glory and Honour and Worship: All Might, Majesty and Dominion for Ever and Ever. Amen.

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a 1 Tim. VI. 20, 21. 2 Tim. II. 16. *b* 1 Tim. VI, 3, 4. *c* 2 Tim. I. 13. *d* Jude v. 3. *e* 1 Tim. III. 15. *f* v. 16.

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SERMON VIII.

Preached *June* 5. 1729.

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1 Cor. II. 14.

—— *Becauſe they are Spiritually diſcerned.*

THESE Words in their nearer and more remote Connection give us the *Reaſon*, why the *Natural Man receiveth not the things of* God, *neither can he know them.* He *receiveth them not*, becauſe in his *Natural* State, and according to the *Principles* of *Natural* Science he is indiſpoſed to believe them: He is rather prejudiced againſt them, and *they are fooliſhneſs unto him*: As he *receiveth not the Things of* God from a Natural Indiſpoſition, *neither can he know them, becauſe they are Spiritualy*

diſcerned: There is a Natural Limitation of his Knowledge, which reſtraineth it from extending to them: and there is a Natural Blindneſs in his preſent eſtate, which hindereth him from *diſcerning* them. With reſpect to the *limitation* of our Knowledge *it hath not entered into the heart of Man to conceive*; with reſpect to our Natural Blindneſs, *it hath not entered into the heart of Man to believe them*: with regard to the firſt we could not *know them*, becauſe *no Man knoweth the things of* GOD, *but the Spirit of* GOD: with reference to the ſecond we cannot *believe them*, nor when *revealed* can we *know them* in a *ſaving* manner, *becauſe they are Spiritualy diſcerned.*

From hence alſo we may collect the Reaſon why the *Apoſtle* taught *theſe things not in the Words, which Man's Wiſdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth, comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual, becauſe they are Spiritualy diſcerned.*

There are ſeveral ſenſes, in which both Ancient and Modern Writers have explained what is meant by the *Natural Man*; but as ſome of them are forced and conceited, and none of them, which differ from the Scriptures, true, I ſhall mention only *theſe three*, which the Scriptures give us, in as few Words as I can.

1. Firſt the *Natural Man* is ſometimes expreſſed by the *Carnal Man*, and then theſe Terms are reciprocal, the *Carnal* ſignifying no more than the mere *Natural Man*: In this ſenſe the *Apoſtle* uſeth the Word *Carnal* in the [a] next

[a] 1 Cor. III. 1.

Chapter

Chapter opposing it to *Spiritual*, where by *Carnal* he doth not mean the *Lusts* of the *Flesh*, but only the *Natural Man* in this his *Natural* state of Infirmity, and applieth it to those *Christians* whom he calleth *Babes in Christ*, as being led away with partial Affections to their Teachers, and not yet arrived to a state of Perfection.

2. *Secondly*, By the *Words* preceeding the Text, the *Natural Man* is intended to denote the *inward Frame* and *Constitution* of the Mind, without any respect to the gross and *Carnal Appetite*, so that by our meer *Natural* Powers we cannot *know the Things of* God: even the *hidden Wisdom, which none of the Princes*, or Wise Men *of this World knew*, those things, *which eye hath not seen, nor ear head*: These are beyond the Ken of our *Intellectual* Powers, which can neither discern them, before they are brought near, and discovered to us, nor discern them afterwards further, than they are discovered. These are the *Deep things of* God. Our Understanding seeth not into them, but God *hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.*

3. *Thirdly*, the *Carnal Mind* is used to signify the *sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, without any regard to the *Natural* state of our *Intellectual* Powers: as in the *eighth Chapter* to the *Romans*, [a] where in setting forth the *Opposition* between the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*, the *Apostle* teacheth us, *That they, who are after the Flesh, do mind the things of the Flesh*: That *the Carnal Mind is Enmity with* God, and therefore *to be carnaly*

[a] Rom. VIII. 5, 6, 7.

minded is Death. And thus in deſcribing the depraved State and miſerable Condition of the *Natural Man* before his *Regeneration*, he writeth Chap. II. to the [a] *Epheſians*, if we ſupply the *firſt* verſe from the *fifth*, as he paſſeth from the *ſecond* Perſon to the *firſt*, ſpeaking ſometimes to *them* apart, ſometimes *including Himſelf* and the *Jews*; and ſo I ſhall lay the whole Paſſage before you, *And you being dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins* hath He quickned. *Wherein in time paſt ye walked according to the Courſe of this World, according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, the Spirit, that now worketh in the Children of Diſobedience: Among whom alſo we had our Converſation in times paſt, in the Luſts of our Fleſh, fulfilling the Deſires of the Fleſh and of the Mind, and were by Nature the Children of Wrath, even as others. But* GOD, *who is rich in Mercy, for his great Love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in Sins, hath quickned us together with Chriſt.*

This then is the *Natural Man* according to the *Luſts of the Fleſh* and *the Deſires of the Mind*: ſometimes the *Apoſtle* alludeth to the Weak and Infant ſtate of his *Converts*; ſometimes to the Natural Limits and Defects of our Intellectual Powers, but oftener to the Corruption of the the Heart and Defilement of the Mind, and in this ſenſe the *One* is promiſcuouſly uſed for the *Other*.

Where then they are reciprocal, the *Carnal Mind* is indifferently uſed to denote the *Natural Man*: As when with reſpect to the Body

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[a] Epheſ. II. 1, 2, 3, 5.

alone

alone St *Peter* telleth us, [a] *All Flesh is grass*; and again the Soul, meaning by it that Animate and living Principle, which we have in common with the *Beasts that perish*, sometimes implieth the Carnal, or Bodily part of *Man*, as when he saith, that *in the* [b] *Ark few, that is eight Souls were saved*: For *Man* is denominated sometimes from his *Flesh* and *Body*, sometimes from his *Soul*, or the *Animal part*: and sometimes the Term *Carnal* is applied to his *Natural* and *Intellectual* Powers, as the *Will* is *byassed* and the *Understanding darkened* by *Lust* and *Passion*; But how variously soever the *Term* is applied to *Soul* or *Body*, the *Lusts* themselves are always ascribed *to*, and expressed *by* the *sensual Appetite*, and the *grosser* part of our *Nature*: they are emphaticaly called the *Lusts of the Flesh*, with respect to their prevalence it is, that the *Mind* it self is called *Carnal*, and so the *Carnal Mind is Enmity with* God.

To apply these *Expositions*, The *Natural Man* mentioned in the Text by the meer light of his *Reason* cannot *know the Things of* God, and the *Carnal* Mind immersed in *Fleshly Lusts* cannot *relish* nor *receive them*: The *Natural Man receiveth them not*, because not being proposed according to the Maxims of *Philosophy*, nor in the Pomp of *Oratory*, *they are Foolishness unto him*: *Things*, which by his meer *Natural* Light he can neither understand nor account for: Upon this ground, [c] *Christ crucified is to the Jews a stumbling Block, and to the Greeks Foolishness.* And the

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a 1 Pet. I. 24. *b* III. 20. *c* 1 Cor. I. 23.

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Carnal Mind is not in a Diſpoſition to receive them, when propoſed, nor to continue in them, when profeſſed: if in its Infancy it hath been inſtructed in the School of *Chriſtianity*, it doth not, when it is afterwards corrupted, like to retain them. Theſe are ever the true Principles of *Infidelity* in not receiving them: of *Hereſy* in contradicting them, and of *Apoſtacy* in departing from them. So evidently do *Apoſtacy*, *Hereſy*, and *Infidelity* ſpring from the ſame *bitter Root*, and flow from the ſame *corrupted Fountain.*

Our *Natural* Incapacity to know *the Things of* God I have abundantly ſhewed in ſeveral of theſe Diſcourſes: I have alſo diſcourſed at large concerning the *Neceſſity* of a *Revelation* both to *declare* the *Will* of God, and to *enforce* the *Obligation* of his *Laws*: And further, that as we cannot attain to a true Knowledge of God and his *Attributes* without *Revelation*, there are beſides ſeveral great and *Myſterious* Points, which can be known by *Revelation* only: It is with reſpect to *theſe* eſpecialy, that the *Apoſtle* ſpeaketh in this *Chapter*, and *theſe* are *thoſe Things* of God, which, above all others, *are Spiritualy diſcerned.*

As by conſidering the *Analogy* of *Language*, and the *Analogy* of *Faith*, I have endeavoured to lay down ſome *Rules* of *Interpretation* agreable to the *Apoſtle*'s manner of *Teaching*, I ſhall in this Diſcourſe for a *Concluſion* of the *Whole* examine the *ſeveral Heretical Schemes* now prevalent among us, and compare their *Way* of *Diſcerning*, and *Judging*, and *Teaching* theſe Things

Things of GOD, with the *Method used* by the *Apostle*, and *followed* by the *Church*.

For if *these things* cannot be *known* nor *received* by the meer *Natural Man*, *because they are Spiritualy discerned*, there is, and can be but *one uniform* and *consistent* Method of coming to the Knowledge of *them*, and *this* is opposed to *Human Wisdom* and *Human Knowledge* both as to the *Subject* that is *treated* of, and the *Language* it is *treated* in. The *Subject* is the *Wisdom* of GOD, even his *hidden* and *Mysterious Wisdom*, very different from the *Wisdom* of the *World*: The *Language* is not that *Excellency* of *Speech*, which the *Grecian Orators* and *Philosophers* affected, and the *Apostle's Preaching was not with enticing Words of Man's Wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of Power; That our Faith should not stand in the Wisdom of Men, but in the Power of* GOD. The *Things* are *great* and *glorious*, but the *Language* is *plain*, and the *method unaffected*, the *Periods* are not laboured nor ambitious of any *Ornaments* but what rise from the greatness and importance of the *Subject*. Which *Things also* the Apostles spoke *not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.* Since therefore they were not taught, we must not judge of *the Things of* GOD according to the *Principles* and *Maxims* of *Human Science*, but according to those *Revelations*, which are given us, concerning the *Divine Nature* and *Attributes*, and we must *receive* them not according to the *Figurative Schemes* and *Language* of *Human Wisdom*, but according to those *plain* Assertions of *Fact* delivered in the Scrip-

Scriptures. This is the only ſure way of proceeding, and the *Things of* God are then truly diſcerned and judged of, when *Spiritual things are compared with Spiritual*, and every part of *Revelation* is received in a ſenſe agreable to, and conſiſtent with all the other.

It will be proper therefore to conſider the *Points* propoſed, and the ſeveral Methods of *Teaching* them, the *Difficultys* ariſing on both ſides, and the *Conſequences* neceſſarily following the *Genuin Doctrine* of the *Church*, and the *ſeveral Schemes* of *thoſe* who have departed from it.

1. For the *Points* propoſed, they have been mentioned already, as they are contained in the great *Subject* of the *Apoſtle*'s Diſcourſe, which he calleth *the hidden Wiſdom*, or *the Wiſdom of* God *in a Myſtery*: even the Eternal *Purpoſe* and *Counſel* of God for the *Redemption* of the World, and in Conſequence of this, the *Opening* and *diſcloſing* to us the *Divine Order* and *Oeconomy* in the *Manner* and *Method* of its *Accompliſhment* by the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*.

We might *never* poſſibly have ſeen ſo plainly this *Diſtinction* of *Perſons* in the Eternal and Ever Glorious God-Head, had Mankind continued in a ſtate of Innocence and Perfection: *This* manner of *Diſtinction* by their *ſeveral Operations* in the great Work of our *Redemption*, it is certain, *never* could have appeared; But as the *Fall* was foreſeen, and the *Diſtinction* not obſcurely pointed out at the *Creation*, which was *afterwards* more fully diſcovered at the *Redemption* of the World, the clearer *Revelation* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt* in the *Redemption*

tion of the World will ſerve to teach us, how infallibly to *interpret* and *diſtinguiſh* the *ſame Perſons* Co-operating in the *Creation*.

In the Scriptures there are *two* diſtinct *Revelations*: *One* relating to the *Being* and *Attributes* of God with regard to his *Eſſence* alone, and containing alſo the *whole Duty of Man* with regard to *Natural Religion*, as Contradiſtinguiſhed to that, which from the *Nature* of its Subject is more ſtrictly, and peculiarly called *Revealed*, and is for the moſt part alſo *antecedent* to *it*. This *Revelation* reſpecting *Natural Religion* was made firſt to the *Patriarchs* from the Beginning of the World: Afterward to the *Children of Iſrael* under *Moſes*, and the whole Succeſſion of their *Prophets*; only we muſt obſerve, that all theſe *Revelations* were joined and accompanied with ſeveral Branches of *Inſtituted Religion*, as of *Sacrifices*, as high as *Adam*: of the *ſame* again, as high as *Noah*: of *Circumciſion* given to *Abraham*, and the whole *Ritual Law* to the *Children of Iſrael*: In theſe the *Unity* and *Perfections* of the *Divine Nature* are clearly *revealed*, and the *Divine Worſhip* and *Honour* are rigorouſly *reſtrained* and *aſſerted* to the *One True* God, and this *Divine Unity*, *Perfections* and *Worſhip* are as ſtrongly aſſerted in the *New Teſtament*, as under the *Old*.

The *Other* is what we do ſtrictly and more peculiarly call *Revealed Religion*, ſuch as we could have no Conception of without a *Revelation*, nor any *Conception* further than *what* is *revealed*. This is that *Counſel* of God ſo often mentioned,

tioned, [a] *Which Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive* by any other Means: even the *wonderful*, and *amazing Work* of our *Redemption.*

The *first* of these *Revelations* assisteth, and correcteth our *Natural Light*, and convinceth our *Reason*, that *Thus* it *must Be*: That there is an *Eternal first Cause* of *Infinite Perfection.* The *second* openeth a Scene otherwise entirely shut up from our View, and informeth us, *How we stand* in our *present Condition* with respect to God: *How* we are *forfeited*, and *How* we are *restored*: And when *Natural Religion* in our *present State* would prove our *utter Ruin* and *Condemnation* by Reason of that *Obligation*, we *cannot perform*, and of our *Incapacity* to *satisfy* for the *Violation* of it, *this other Revealed* teacheth, in *what manner* we are enabled to discharge the *Dutys* of it, and upon *what Terms* we are *accepted* in it.

So that if *Revealed Religion* be considered only as an *Help* and *Assistant* to *Natural*, as we cannot in this depraved estate discharge the *Dutys* of *Natural Religion*, and when we have *transgressed*, as [b] *none can redeem his Brother, nor give ransom, nor make agreement unto* God *for him*, It ought in this View alone most thankfully to be received, and all the *Instituted* Parts of it should be considered not only as *Helps* and *Motives* to our *Duty*, but moreover as *Means* of *Pardon* and *Reconciliation* for our *Offences.*

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a 1 Cor. II. 9. *b* Psal. XLIX. 7.

From

From this mention I have made of *Inſtituted Religion*, I would not enter into any Debate concerning the *Preference*, or into any *Compariſon* between *that* and *Natural*, in point of *Excellence* or *Obligation*: There is indeed no *Room*, nor *Foundation* for *ſuch* a Diſpute, and thoſe, who ſet *one* in Rivalſhip as it were, againſt the *other*, do nothing leſs than endeavour the *Deſtruction* of *Both*.

It is true the *Inſtitutions* of *Religion* are to be conſidered as *Means* to the *End*: Of *themſelves* they are of no *ſignificancy* or *value*, but only as they are *ordained* of God for thoſe good and gracious Purpoſes, to which He hath *appointed* them: If The *End* they were *appointed* to promote, were only the *Practice* of *Moral Dutys*, is it *indifferent*, whether they be *obſerved* or *not*? If *Moral Dutys* may be more perfectly performed by the *Obſervation* of them, than *without*, even then the *Obſervation* would be *neceſſary*: For our parts we embrace them, as great *Helps* in the Diſcharge of our *Moral Dutys*, and are far from preſuming, that we can diſcharge them as well *without* as *with* the *Uſe* of theſe *Means*: *Baptiſm* engageth us under a *Vow* of *Faith* and *Obedience*: and the *Supper of the Lord* ratifieth and reneweth that *Vow*, as often, as we receive it, and ſo far, from a due *Conſideration* and *Conſcience* of our *Vows*, they are *helpful* to *Morality*; But let us not be led into a *Miſtake*, the *Practice* of *Morality* is *not* the *only End*: The *laſt* and *higheſt Concern* of *Man* is his chiefeſt and moſt proper *End*, beyond which there can be no *other*, and to which all our *Actions* ſhould be *directed*: In this

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ſenſe the *Practice* of *Morality* it ſelf is only a *Means* to the *End*: and all Inſtances of *Faith* and *Obedience* are the *ſame*; It is true [a] *the End of the Commandment is Charity out of a pure Heart and of a good Conſcience*, and, as the *Apoſtle* addeth, of *Faith unfeigned*: And the End of the Law is *Obedience*; But the End of *Charity* and *Obedience*, *what* they are *ordained* unto, *that* is the proper End of all a Mans *Actions* and *Endeavours*. The End of *Man* therefore with reſpect to his *Maker* is the *Glory of* God, to which he ſhould direct all his *Thoughts* and *Actions*, and to *which* God *however* will *direct* them, and *make* the *Evil* as well as *Good*, the *Sinner* as well as the *Saint* contribute to his *Glory*; for he will be *glorified in all*; for tho' it is our Eternal *Happineſs* to promote his *Glory*, It is not in our Power to *defeat* it. The *End* of *Man* with regard to *Himſelf* is his own *Salvation*, and by *intending* the *Glory* of God we purſue *both* Ends at once and intend the Salvation of our *Souls* alſo. The *Means* to theſe are *Obedience* to God's *Will*, however manifeſted, and the *Performance* of thoſe Conditions, whether of a *Moral* or *Poſitive Nature*, which He hath *required*: In this view the *Dutys* of *Natural Religion*, thus conſidered as Means to an End, do then, when they are *joined* with the Means appointed by *Revealed Religion*, become *Accepted* of God, and thro' *thoſe* Means *Effectual* to *attain* their End. For the *Inſtituted Dutys* are not only Motives and Means to the Practice of *Morality*, but are alſo Inſtruments of *deriving* God's *Grace* upon

[a] 1 Tim. I. 5.

our

our *Souls*, to *purify* us from *Sin* as in *Baptism*, and to *apply* the Seal of *Pardon* thro' the Merits of *Christ's Death*, as in the *Lord's Supper*. *This* is a short and full, not a tedious and partial Explication of this Matter; This is the *whole Truth* without any Misrepresentation, or setting one part of our Duty at *variance* with another: In this the great *Goodness* and *Mercy* of God appeareth, in the Pardon of our *Sins*, and Acceptance of our *imperfect Obedience*. If *this* be not the *true State* of the *Case*, why then let *Men* stand boldly on *bare naked Foot* of *Natural Religion* alone, and put their *Salvation* as they must do, upon the full *Performance* of *all* the *Dutys* of it without the *Transgression* of *any*; and if they have *Transgressed*, and if in their *best Actions* there be found any *Flaw* or *Infirmity*, let them *plead* their *Meuits*, and *challenge* their *Reward*, or claim their *Pardon* at least upon such *Reparation*, as they of themselves are able to make for their *Offences*; and this upon due Consideration will shew a *Christian* the *Obligation* and *Importance* of those *Positive Institutions* the *two Sacraments* of our *Religion*, by which the *Interests* of *Morality* are not only *promoted*, but the *great Business* of our *Salvation* also most surely *conducted*.

Having touched upon this Point I would take some Notice of the Pretence that the *End* being *more noble* is therefore *preferable* to the *Means*: And so it is, when *using* the *One* becomes *inconsistent* with, or *unnecessary* to the *Pursuit* of the *Other*. Where *this* is the Case of *Positive Institutions*, we may presume, that God hath

hath repealed them; ſo far, as any *Interfering* can be ſuppoſed between the *Means* and the *End*, there the *Means* muſt give place, and in ſuch Caſes our *Lord* hath taught us to prefer *Mercy* to *Sacrifice*: The *Poſitive* Precept muſt give place, if it ſhall ſo fall out, that the Work of *Mercy* will be neglected, ſhould the *Poſitive* Precept juſt at that juncture be obſerved: But yet ſo far, as *Poſitive* Inſtitutions are conſidered as Means to an End, there is a *reciprocal* Relation, and Reſpect of *Each* to *Other*, and a Man may as reaſonably hope to attain his End by neglecting the proper Natural Means, as by neglecting the Poſitive, which GOD hath appointed, and thereby made *neceſſary* to the End. In the Purſuit of Common Ends there is a great variety of Means, and every Man may make choice as he pleaſeth, and change them as often as he pleaſeth for others, which he finds or imagines to be better adapted. But to *Chriſtians* GOD hath made his Inſtitutions neceſſary to the great End they have in view, and they cannot *ordinarily* attain it any *other* way: The two *Sacraments* which *Chriſt hath ordained in his Church*, whether *they* were *chiefly* ordained for the ſake of *Morality* or not, are *generaly neceſſary to Salvation*, that is, where *they* can be *adminiſtered* according to his Inſtitution, and are not neglected upon *Principle* or *Contempt*: Well then, the Means are ordained for the End; *therefore*, *what follows*, why *therefore regard not the Means*: for either *they* will *defeat* the End, or the End may be *obtained* without *them*: But is this good Conſequence?

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Whatever may be the Case of meer *outward Profession*, which is altogether *Destructive* and *Vain*, the *Observation* of the Means hath in all other Points been ever thought the sureſt and moſt natural Courſe to the End.

But beſides theſe Points of expreſs *Revelation* and *Command* there are alſo ſome other, which relate to *Natural Religion* and are included in our *Natural* Apprehenſions of the *Divine Being*. I ſhall mention but *two*: The *Omniſcience* particularly the *Preſcience*, and the *Omnipreſence* of God.

1. And firſt for the *Divine Omniſcience* particularly as it reſpecteth the *Preſcience* of *Futurity*, and the *Contingency* of *Human Actions*.

The *Socinians* and *Pelagians*, do deny directly, as the ſtrict *Predeſtinarians* are charged by Conſequence to impeach God's *Foreknowledge* of *Contingences*: *Theſe* falling into the Doctrine of *Fate*, and *Thoſe* into that of *Chance*: *Theſe* taking away the *Liberty* of *Action* by *Neceſſity*, and *Thoſe* by *Contingency*, as he, that acteth *Contingently* acteth with no more *Liberty*, than he, that acteth by *Neceſſity*: But to illuſtrate *Both*, there are *Others*, who in the groſſeſt manner do deny the *Divine Preſcience*, and they proceed upon the looſe *Atheiſtical Scheme*, ſupported by the *Socinian* way of Diſcourſing upon this Subject, which may ſerve to ſhew the *Socinians* the *Uſe* that is made of their Doctrine, and indeed the Connection between them is ſo *cloſe* that Confuting the *One* will be a Confutation of the *Other* alſo.

With regard to the Divine *Attributes* we might indeed expect that every *Sect* which calleth it self *Christian*, doth receive and acknowledge them in one *Uniform* and *Consistent* sense with the *Church*: For this is *Natural Religion*, tho' fixed by *Revelation*, and *Natural* is equaly the *Religion* of *All*: of *those* especialy, who believe the *Scriptures*: Difference in these Points sheweth these two things: *first* the *Inability* of our *Reason* to fix the just Conceptions of *Natural Religion*, or to resolve such Questions, as belong to the *Attributes* of God: *secondly* that for want of Comprehending, how these things can be, the *Adversarys* are as ready to dispute and deny the *Mysterys* of *Natural Religion*, as of *Revealed*, and their Mistakes are owing to the *same* Causes in *both*: For their *Reason* is in the Dark, when it searcheth into the *Mysterys* of *Omniscience*, and they are are not able to reconcile the *Fore-knowledge* of God with the *Contingency* and *Liberty* of *Human Actions*.

But all this is arguing just as in other *Mysterys* they do, from the *Method* and *Limitation* of *Human* Knowledge to *Divine*; whereas if they did truly consider, that God's Knowledge is *Infinite* and therefore *Incomprehensible* both as to the Manner and Compass of it, they would never argue against the *Divine Prescience* necessarily concluded in *Omniscience* upon any Difficultys arising from the *Freedom* of *Man's Will* or the *Contingency* of his *Actions*.

If we were not able to clear up the Mysterys of *Omniscience*, yet we depend not, as in other *Mysterys*, upon *Divine Revelation* only, but upon

upon the *Concluſions* of *Reaſon* alſo in the Caſe before us, and as to the preſent *Queſtion* we are more aſſured upon the *Principles* of *Natural Religion*, that God is *Omniſcient*, than we can be that his *Preſcience* reacheth not to *Contingences*, or is inconſiſtent with the *Liberty* of *Action*; It is therefore both very *unphiloſophical* and *abſurd* to deny the *Divine Preſcience*, which, if it be any kind of *Knowledge*, is evidently included in *Omniſcience*: or rather, becauſe there are no *Degrees*, nor *Succeſſion*, nor *Progreſs* in the *Divine Knowledge*, it is, as I ſhall ſhew, the *ſame* with *Omniſcience*. The Impotence of our Reaſon, and the Scantineſs of our Knowledge is no more an Objection to this than to any other of God's *Attributes*, and tho' in our way of thinking it ſhould appear that *Preſcience* in us would be inconſiſtent with the *Contingency* and *Liberty* of Action, yet this is no Argument, that it is *ſo* with God, unleſs the *Rule* and *Compaſs* of His *Knowledge* were alſo the *ſame* with *Ours*.

I ſhall juſt offer ſome ſhort *Strictures* therefore upon the *Objections* in this arduous Point of the *Preſcience* or *Omniſcience* of God.

By *Omniſcience* without extending it, as we ought, to Numberleſs Worlds, and therein to all *Natural* and *Moral Agents*, how many kinds of them ſoever there be, we commonly underſtand the *Knowledge* and *Foreknowledge* of God relating to this World, and the Actions and Affairs of Men from the Beginning to the End, upon the *Scheme* of *Natural Religion* only, tho' in *Revealed* we find an Intercourſe and Com-

munication of *Angels*, both *Good* and *Evil* with *Men*. And so far as the *Heathen* have taken notice of this Correspondence we must resolve it into some *Traditionary Revelation*.

But if by *Omniscience* we only understand the *Knowledge* of every thing, that *hath* been, or *now* is transacted in the World, we contract it to narrower Bounds, than even *Human* Knowledge is confined to; For in *Human* Knowledge there is a *sort* of *Prescience* according to which *Measures* are taken, and *Laws* are framed for *promoting* the *Happiness*, and *preventing* or *removing* the *Miserys* of *Communitys*, and by which also *Private Men* provide against the *Future* in their *Domestic* Concerns.

However in the *Scheme* of *Natural Religion*, it is agreed by all, who own a GOD of *Infinite* Perfections, and believe his *Providence*, that He is not only *Omniscient*, and that this *Omniscience* is not only *manifested*, but that it is also *necessary* in the *Order* and *Government* of the *World*, and that *Prescience* particularly is *required* in the *Method* and *Administration* of his *Providence*.

This *Prescience* comprises the *Knowledge* of things *Future*, as *Omniscience* comprehendeth altogether things *Past*, *Present*, and to *Come*: And it is this *Knowledge* of the *Future*, which is principaly intended, forasmuch as all *Knowledge* of *Past* and even *Present*, is *too late* for the *Guidance* and *Direction* of *Human Affairs*, and to exclude the *Knowledge* of *Futurity* is in effect to exclude *Providence* it self, which in the very *Name*, and *Notation* of the Word implieth a *Foresight*

ſight and *Proviſion*; and becauſe this *Knowledge* among other Subjects, hath a ſpecial reſpect to the *Actions* of Men, it muſt therefore take in Contingences, ſuch, as *Human Actions* are; therefore to deny God's *Foreknowledge* of Contingences and to deny any *Foreknowledge* at all is the *ſame* thing with reſpect to Events depending upon *Moral Agents*; and to ſay, that God knoweth *Future Events* without knowing the *Train* of *Cauſes*, which ſhall produce them, is ſtill more hard to conceive. The *Event* is as Contingent as the *Action*, and in the ordinary Courſe the Contingency of the *One* dependeth upon the Contingency of the *Other*. For it is the Action, which maketh the Event Contingent, otherwiſe as in *Natural* Cauſes the Effect would be Uniform and Sure.

But beſides theſe general Conſiderations, there is one ſpecial Evidence of God's *Foreknowledge* reaching to all Contingences, which is, that in the Courſe and Adminiſtration of his *Providence* He oftentimes *overruleth* the *Actions* of Men to an *Iſſue* contrary to their *Natural Tendency*: By this means eſpecialy He bringeth *Good* out of *Evil*, and thorough this Superindendency and Command of all *Events*, the wiſeſt Counſels and the greateſt Strength are defeated by the weakeſt Inſtruments: the beſt laid, and beſt executed Deſigns fail of Succeſs, and, what is more remarkable, produce a quite contrary Effect. This might be proved, as things of this Nature require, by an *Induction* of *Particulars* collected from *Hiſtory* both *Sacred* and *Profane*, for tho' the *Sacred*

Writers are not considered in this Argument as *inspired*, yet they may be used, as of Equal *Credit*, as *True* in their *Relations*, and as *Just* in their *Remarks*, as any other. But for this *Induction* I refer to those, who have made it, and to the *Books* themselves from whence the several Facts are extracted; and then it will appear, that tho' ordinarily speaking, [a] *Without Counsel Purposes are disappointed*; yet in an Extraordinary way, [b] *The Lord bringeth the Counsel of the Heathen to nought, and maketh the Devices of the People of none Effect, and casteth out the Counsel of Princes. But the Counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, and the Thoughts of his Heart to all Generations*: [c] *There are many Devices in a Man's Heart, nevertheless the Counsel of the Lord it shall stand.* Man acts, as he pleases, according to his own *Counsel* and *Devices*, but God seeth thro' the *whole* Course and Progress of all his *Designs*, and giveth such a *Turn* and *Direction* to *them* as defeateth the Counsel of the Wise, and disappointeth the Expectation of Men; and surely it is not a Declaration unbecoming the *Almighty*, when He saith, [d] *My Counsel shall stand, I will do all my Pleasure.* This He cannot perform, unless He hath all Contingences in his *View*, and all Events in his *Power*. Whatsoever *Men* design, or howsoever they act, the Event sheweth that It is directed by God, and the Course of our *Actions* sheweth, that *they* are entirely *Free*, while they produce an *Effect*, which neither their own Nature led to, nor

a Prov. XV. 22. b Psal. XXXIII. 10, 11. c Prov. XIX. 21. d Isa. XLVI. 10.

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the *Agents* designed: For tho' He conducteth our Actions to his own Purpose, yet He doth neither by his *Fore-knowledge* necessitate, nor by his *Interposition* constrain us to act in that *particular* Manner, but we do freely propose the *End*, and chuse the *Means* for its accomplishment; but when we have acted, as we please, and our *Actions* considered as *Natural* or *Moral Means* should have a *Correspondent Effect*, He giveth what *Event*, He pleaseth to them. This clearly accounteth for the *Freedom* of our *Actions*, notwithstanding his *Fore-knowledge*, and from the *History* of his *Providence* we may learn, that no Contingency can defeat his *Purpose*, or escape his *Knowledge*: His *Prescience* is established upon undeniable Facts, and if we cannot reconcile it to our way of Thinking and Arguing, we may remember that his *Knowledge* is *infinite*, and his *Wisdom Incomprehensible*, as St *Paul* cryeth out in Raptures upon the Contemplation of it. [a] *How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out?* However, what is *evident* in *Fact*, we may defend in *Reason* so far at least, as to shew, that we are not qualified to determine upon what we cannot understand, and that the *Schemes* of those, who deny the *Divine Prescience* are *some* of them *Blasphemous*, and *all* of them *False*.

Because we are not able to solve all *Questions* relating to these Points we are not therefore to deny them: There are many Doubts of meer *Curiosity*, and 'tis endless travelling in the Mazes

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[a] Rom. XI. 33.

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of *Freewill*, *Necessity*, *Liberty* and *Contingency*. How we act with *Liberty*, when our Actions are foreseen, would be unanswerable, were our Actions *determined*, as well as *foreseen*, which is the Consequential Objection to the *Predestinarian Scheme*. But *Prescience* no more affecteth our Actions or manner of Acting *before*, than the *Knowledge*, that we have so Acted, affecteth them *afterwards*. Here is a *Series* of Actions, which are beheld all at once, either in *Prospect*, or in *Retrospect*: no *series* of Actions *past* is affected by the the *Retrospect*, nor is any *series* of Actions to come affected by the *Prospect*. It is only taking a *view* of them *altogether* as they *have been*, or *shall be*, and He, that by way of *Prophecy* shall *Advertise us*, *what shall come to pass in the latter Days*, no more influenceth the *Events*, than the *Historian*, that *recordeth them*, for things do not *come to pass*, because they are *foreseen*, but therefore they are *foreseen*, because they shall *come to pass*; To suppose an Action done without being *foreseen* leaveth us at perfect *Liberty*, and to suppose the *same* Action *foreseen* detracteth nothing from that *Liberty*, since it would have been *so* done after the *same* manner, if it had not been *foreseen*.

But further we form wrong Notions of God's *Knowledge* by likening it too strictly both in Manner and Measure to *our Own*. His *Knowledge* groweth not, nor encreaseth, as *Ours* doth, for then it could not be *Infinite*. It admitteth of no *Addition* or *Progression* any more, than his *Eternity* admitteth of any *Succession* of *Ages*, or *Years*, or *Moments*. The Actions, that

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not *Yet*, God seeth, just as [a] *He calleth those things, that be not, as though they were.* In his *Knowledge*, as in his *Eternity* there is Nothing *Future*, and Nothing *Past*: It is *Prescience* with respect to *us*, whose Actions are *called forth* in *Order* of *Time*, but it is *Knowledge* with reference to God [b] *the High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth Eternity*, and his *Prescience* is the same with his actual *Beholding*: Man, while God seeth *how* he *will* and *doth* act, hath as perfect and convincing a *Consciousness* of the *Liberty*, wherewith he *acteth*, as of his *Actions* themselves; and it will be a strange Conclusion, that God cannot *foresee* them, because Man is *Conscious*, that they are *Free*.

The *Objection* is still weaker from the Minuteness and Circumstances of Mens *Actions*, and full as absurd, as it would be to suppose it more difficult to do *small* things than *great*; or more properly to suppose any *Difficulty* at all. For, [c] *is any thing too hard for the Lord?* Is it any *weariness* or *labour* to Him to exert either his *Knowledge* or his *Power*.

Having said this in general with regard to the *Socinian* or *Pelagian* Tenents, I shall observe more especialy upon the *Atheistical* Scheme, that those *great* Men of *Parts* and *Penetration* deny God's *Prescience* of *Contingences* for these *Weighty* and *Philosophical* Reasons. Because *it cannot be demonstrated*: because *it is impossible*: because *it is not necessary to the Divine Perfections*: and because *it is incompatible with the Liberty of*

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a Rom. IV. 17. b Is. LVII. 15. c Gen. XVIII. 14.

Action,

Action, which I have ſpoken to already. All this is true with reſpect to their *Material God*, whoſe *Intelligence*, that I may ſpeak *Contingently*, may *poſſibly not* be *Infinite*, and whoſe *Knowledge* perhaps may be very *ſmall*, perhaps *ſmaller* than their *own*: It is indeed impoſſible, that *ſuch a God* ſhould know *more* than a *Creature*, and that *Being*, which *created Nothing*, may likewiſe *know Nothing* at all; and I am very ſure, it cannot be proved from his *Compoſition*, that *he is a God of Knowledge*. Neither is it neceſſary to the *Perfection* of *ſuch* a *Divinity* to *foreſee Contingences*, whoſe *whole* Perfection is the *Eternal Neceſſity* of *Exiſtence* under *ſucceſſive Modifications* of *Eternal Matter* and *Eternal Intelligence* mixed up with a *Life* that is *not Eternal*, but ſtill *flitting* from one Portion of *Matter* to another. The *Preſcience* of ſuch a *Deity* can no more be *demonſtrated*, than his *Omnipotence*, and while theſe *Demonſtrators* pretend to prove, there is no *Divine Preſcience* of *Contingences*, they do at the ſame time prove in their way, that there is no *Preſcience* and no God at all.

That a Divine *Preſcience* of Contingences is not demonſtrable from the *Nature* of the *Things* is very true, that is, if they know what they mean, when they talk ſo *magiſterialy*, and amuſe ordinary *Readers* at every turn with the *Nature* of the *Thing*, the *Things* being *Contingent* is no *Medium* to demonſtrate, that they are *foreknowable*; and the Impoſſibility, that Contingences can be *foreknown*, may then be *demonſtrated*, when they ſhall be able to *demonſtrate*, that there is no God, or what cometh much

much to the same thing, that if there be *Any*, *He must be such a One as Theirs*, which is hardly so *good*, as being *such a One as Themselves*, since upon their Principles, as they make *Intelligence* dependent upon *Matter*, they cannot prove, that there are any *reasonable* Beings besides Men in the World, nor can they prove, that Man is *reasonable*, but by *Fact*: when they shall be able to prove *themselves* to be *reasonable Beings* from the *Nature* and *Constitution* of the *Mind*, and can truly tell, what *Thought* and *Reason* are, and how far *Matter* is *capable* of them, they will then have overthrown all their own *Hypotheses* and *Demonstrations*.

But some *Foreknowledge* however is allowed: The *God* whom they have *set up*, *foreknoweth* in general for instance, that Man will act as Man according to his *Nature*, just as Plants will grow after their *Kind*; and not only so, but for certain reasons very convenient for themselves, they indulge unto *their God* a *Foreknowledge* more particularly, that *every Man will act according to his Constitution and Complection*, which with them is to act also according to *Nature*: This is a sort of *Foreknowledge*, which if we take it in general, every Man may be possessed of, thus qualified at least, that in the *main* Man will act, like a *Reasonable Creature*: but in Fact this *Foreknowledge* would fail, as often as Men *forsook* their *Reason*, and *followed* their *Constitution*: and *so* the *second Foreknowledge* disappointeth the *first*, and taken in *particular* it is *false* in *Fact*, and *disproveth* it self also. For *Socrates*, and I might mention many others, did not *act*

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according to his *Complection*, and every Man muſt ſtrive againſt his Complection, that is againſt every predominant Luſt and Paſſion, if he would act according to his *Reaſonable Nature*: For theſe things, truly ſtated, are ſo far from being the *ſame*, that they are *incompatible*: the Truth is, it is the *Duty* of every Man to act according to his *Nature*: It may be the *Condemnation* of any Man to act according to his *Conſtitution*, eſpecialy, if his *Complection* ſhould indicate a Bad one. To act according to *Human Nature*, ſuch, as God created it, is the Law and Perfection of our *Nature*: To follow our *Conſtitution*, ſuch, as Sin hath made it, is to ſink under the Weakneſs and Depravity of our *Nature*: To act up to the Dignity of our *Nature* is our Glory, to yield our ſelves up to our particular *Conſtitution* as Luſts and Paſſions ſhall prevail, is our Shame; and whatever theſe Men may dream, this *Foreknowledge*, which they allow, will be ſo far from excuſing them in following *Nature* according to their Complections, that, as they plead it as an Excuſe and Authority for their Crime, It is with a Pure and Holy God a great and Blaſphemous Aggravation of their Guilt, which by imputation they charge upon God Himſelf, and they will find in the End, that God's *Foreknowledge* of their *Ways* implieth a *Foreknowledge* of their *Miſerys* alſo.

As to their own *Knowledge* I will venture to pronounce, that they know not what is *Foreknowable* in its own Nature and what is not: But all things are equaly known unto God: With reſpect to *Him* Nothing is *Contingent*, and

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tho' with regard to *themſelves* and *us*, the Actions of all *free Agents* are *Contingent*, and *we* cannot tell, and very often *themſelves* cannot tell *what* they will *do*, yet God ever Beholding them as *done*, they are not *Contingent* to *Him*: The reaſon given, ſuch a one, as it is, why *particular Actions* are not in their *Nature foreknowable* from all *Eternity*, is this; Becauſe the *Agents*, and what they *Act* upon, are not *Eternal*: Which is a reaſon not againſt the *foreknowledge* of *particular* Actions or *Contingences* alone, but againſt *all foreknowledge* whatſoever; For Nothing is *Eternal*, but God, and ſo far is it from being true, that things cannot be *foreſeen* that are not *Eternal*, that the *Reverſe* is exactly true, that Nothing, which is *Eternal* can be *foreknown*: To ſuppoſe that what is *Eternal* is *Foreknowable* is truly a Contradiction in *Terms*, and it is founded upon another Contradiction as flagrant, as *it ſelf*, which is, that there is *ſomething Eternal, beſides what is Eternal.*

But leaving theſe *Unbelievers* to themſelves, let us rather apply our ſelves to thoſe, who receive the *Scriptures* as a *Revelation* from God, and yet deny God's *Foreknowledge* of *Contingences*, when the *Revelation*, they receive, is a *continual Proof* and *Declaration* of it. It will be beſt therefore to take this *Doctrine* from the *Scriptures*, ſince it is not only aſſerted in them, but the *Revelation* of it is alſo moſt agreable to the *Truth* and *Dictates* of *Natural Religion* with regard both to the *Knowledge* and *Foreknowledge* of God. [a] *For all things are naked and opened un-*

[a] Hebr. IV. 13.

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to the Eyes of *Him with whom we have to do*: and thus ſaith the Lord, [a] *I am* GOD *and there is none like me, Declaring the End from the Beginning, and from ancient Times the Things, that are not yet done.* With the *Pſalmiſt* therefore let us addreſs our ſelves unto his glorious Throne, and confeſs, [b] *O Lord, thou haſt ſearched me and known me, Thou knoweſt my downſitting, and mine upriſing, thou underſtandeſt my Thoughts afar off,* long before they ariſe in my Mind: *There is not a Word in my Tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knoweſt it altogether.*

2. The other *Point* is the *Omnipreſence* of GOD. In this alſo all that own a GOD, as well as all that call themſelves *Chriſtians* ſhould agree, ſeeing it is not only the *Doctrine* of *Revelation*, but of *Natural Religion* alſo: And therefore it is the more ſtrange, when to ſerve an *Hypotheſis*, without thinking poſſibly how the *Omnipreſence*, and the *Divine Eſſence* it ſelf is affected by it, ſome great and Excellent Perſons in their Schemes of *Chriſtian Philoſophy* have imagined and conceived of GOD as an *Extended Subſtance*: which *bordereth* ſurely *too near* upon the *Materialiſts*, ſince we cannot conceive an *Extended* Being without conceiving at the ſame time *Quantity*, and *Limitation*, and *Diviſion*; *Extenſion* in this *Myſterious Article* can only be *Analogicaly* underſtood, and *Figuratively* expreſſed: GOD is Eſſentialy *every where*, and the *Divine Being* extendeth to every thing, to which the *Power* and *Providence* of GOD reacheth. His

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[a] Iſ. XLVI. 9, 10. [b] Pſal. CXXXIX. 1, 2, 4.

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Omnipreſence is in ſome meaſure conceived by that *Virtue* and *Energy*, which is *diffuſed* and *exerted* throughout the whole Creation; and could we ſuppoſe ten thouſand times ten thouſand Worlds beyond the Bounds and Circumſcription of thoſe, which compoſe the Univerſe, we now behold around us, we muſt conceive God equaly preſent to *them* alſo: For, as in *Him* we are truly ſaid to *live and move and have our Being*: the vaſteſt Circumſcriptions alſo *move* and *exiſt* in *Him*: we cannot ſay that God is in *Place*, but we can truly ſay, there is no *Place* removed from his *Preſence*; and as we are forced to form our Conceptions by the *Analogy* of *Bodily Preſence*, and *local Circumſcription*, we may even by conſidering the *propriety* and *manner* of expreſſing our ſelves, when we ſpeak of *Bodily Preſence*, form ſome *eaſy Conceptions* of the Divine *Omnipreſence*. For by *Bodily Preſence* we do not mean the *Being* of any *Perſon* in that *circumſcript* place where he ſtands, but his being in any place of leſs or larger Dimenſions with *few* or *more*, with *one* or a *multitude* met together. Thus a Man is *preſent* only with *another* in a *Cloſet*; With a *Multitude* in a *Church* or an *Army*; and every Man will be *preſent* at the *great Day* of *Judgment* in that *Spacious Court* with *all* that have *exiſted* from the *Creation* to the End of the *World*: In this *general Aſſembly* the Preſence of every Man is real, and tho' Bodily, yet is not extended: How much eaſier is it then to conceive the *Actual Preſence* of God in the whole *Univerſe*, without ſuppoſing an *Extended Subſtance*, or rather how unneceſſary

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is it to ſuppoſe the *Subſtance* Extended with the *Preſence*; when even among Men we can conceive the *Preſence* without Extenſion, nay it is certain that the *Preſence* hath no Relation to the *Body* conſidered as Extended, but *only* conſidered as being in *ſuch a place*, where *ten thouſand* may be *equaly preſent* alſo. But whatever *Difficultys* ſome may raiſe, and others give occaſion to, we do not pretend to comprehend the *Omnipreſence* any more than the *Omniſcience* of GOD: much leſs do we preſume to argue againſt it from any *Difficultys* ariſing to us from the Manner of conceiving it; but are content to believe that He is preſent to every one of us, as our own moſt *inward Thoughts*, and in *all Places equaly*, only in ſome with a more *ſpecial Regard*, and *Manifeſtation*, according to our Bleſſed *Lord*'s Aſſurance, [a] *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midſt of them*: and in this ſenſe of a *more ſpecial Preſence* it is ſaid that [b] *Cain went out from the Preſence of the Lord*: For otherwiſe, there is no going from it, as the *Omnipreſence* is admirably expreſſed by the *Pſalmiſt*: [c] *Whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit? or whither ſhall I flee from thy Preſence? If I aſcend up into Heaven, thou art there: if I make my Bed in Hell, behold thou art there: if I take the Wings of the Morning, and dwell in the uttermoſt parts of the Sea: Even there ſhall thy Hand lead me, and thy Right Hand ſhall hold me.* Further than this we cannot ſtretch

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a Matt. XVIII. 20. *b* Gen. IV. 16. *c* Pſal. CXXXIX. 7, 8, 9, 10.

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our Imagination; and we assent with all Reverence to his Question; [a] *Am I a* God *at hand, saith the Lord? and not a* God *afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? do not I fill Heaven and Earth, saith the Lord?* All Difficultys are superceded, when we consider, that *He filleth all things*, and yet leaveth *Space* for *All* infinitely beyond all imaginable Conception of Numberless Worlds without *Extension* or any partial *Application* of his *Substance*. For as He is *Eternal* without *succession* of *Time*, He is *Omnipresent* also without *commensuration* to *Place*. This is indeed *amazing*, and perfectly confoundeth our Thoughts; but these are *Attributes* acknowledged by *Natural Religion*, and of all the *rest* we may urge the *same*. For God is *in all* equaly *incomprehensible*, nor can we know *Him*, as *He is*, in his Ineffable Perfections. His *Omniscience* and *Omnipresence* are properly joined together, inferring and illustrating each other, and the same *Psalm*, that declareth his *Omniscience*, describeth, as we have seen, in some measure his *Omnipresence* also.

After the Points Proposed, I come,

2. Secondly to the *Methods* of *teaching* them: not to debate, which is the *best*, but to justify the *Manner* in which we *teach* and deliver the great and important *Doctrines* both of *Natural* and *Revealed Religion*.

Both these *Revelations*, the *Natural* and the *Mystical*, as I may term them, we are to *teach*, as we have *received* them, in the *plain* and *ob-*

[a] Jer. XXIII. 23, 24.

vious meaning of the Words, in which they are delivered, and *consonant* to that *Analogy* and Accommodation, in which we are to understand the *Things* of God: That *He is All*, but infinitely more, than we are able to conceive, and express: *Real* and *Incomprehensible* in his *Nature* and *Perfections*, without any the *least* Approaches to *Materiality*, or any *Corporeal* Affections: And then accordingly as we understand the *previous Revelation* of the *Divine Nature* and *Attributes*, we are to receive the *subsequent Revelation* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* in the same way of *Analogy*, and consistently with the Divine *Unity*, and all other, the *Essential* Perfections of the *Deity*. The same *Analogy* runneth thro' *both Revelations*, and a *Literal* and *Figurative* Exposition is equaly *destructive* of *Both*: If then we cannot comprehend the *Divine* Perfections, as they are in *themselves*, nor are able by our scantling of Knowledge, the narrow Sphere of our Activity, to dive into the Depths of *Omniscience*, or reach the Immensity of *Omnipresence*: if by arguing upon them according to our way of Thinking and Speaking we must *debase* the Great God to *ourselves*, and deny his *Attributes*, as they are *Infinite* and *Mysterious* to our Understanding, why should we presume to *define*, and *determine* upon the *Manner* of his *Existence*? to pronounce it *impossible* for the *Father*, *Son and Holy Ghost eternaly to subsist* in *One Indivisible* and *Undivided Essence*?

The Use therefore, I would make of this way of arguing upon the *Attributes* is this: That in

in the *same* way, in which we apprehend the *Attributes* of God, we are to take his other *Revelations* also: The *same* way preserveth them *Both* in their *Dignity* and *Consistency*: And the *same* manner of arguing strictly from *Human* Qualitys to *Divine* Perfections, & from *Finite* to *Infinite* runneth Men into the same Consequences in *Both*: We can conceive the *Relation* of *Father* and *Son*, as clearly and indeed more clearly, than we can *Omniscience* and *Omnipresence*: only let us take the *Divine Relation* in a Manner Consistent with the Divine *Perfection*, and we are no more at a plunge to apprehend an *Eternal Generation*, than *Eternity* it self: nor to believe the *Son* is truly a *Son* with the *Whole Nature* of the *Father*, than that God is *Omniscient*, notwithstanding the *Amazements*, which puzzle Man's *Understanding* to resolve them: In the *Revelation* of *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* we are concerned no further than the *Fact*: That to each the *Divine Nature* is equaly ascribed, and when we search more curiously into the Manner, How these things realy are, and take our Measures from *Human* Comparisons in a strict *Literal* Resemblance, then we make either *Three* Gods, or *One* God and *two Creatures*: And by the same Rule we shall deny the *Divine Omniscience* and *Omnipresence*, or explain them in a way *too gross* and *Offensive*: The same *Principles*, that make Men *Infidels* in Points of *revealed Religion* properly so called, will make them *Infidels* in *Natural Religion* also, and they may be as *Heretical* in their *Opinions* of the *Divine Attributes*,

as of the *Divine Relations* diſcloſed and aſſerted in the *Scriptures*.

The way to *teach* them therefore is to *take* them *as they are propoſed* in thoſe *Analogical* and *Subſtituted* Conceptions, which convey them to us, not vainly endeavouring to explain them according to the ſeveral *Schemes* deviſed for ſolving ſuch *Difficultys*, as appear to Mens *ſeveral* Reaſon and *different* Manner of *Apprehenſion*, but *ſubmitting* our *Reaſon* to the *Difficultys*, and *believing* the *Eternal Exiſtence* of the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghoſt*, revealed to be the *One Only* and *True* God, as we believe Him to be *Omniſcient*, *Omnipreſent* and *Eternal*, tho' we are not able to *comprehend* theſe Glorious *Attributes*.

When therefore the *ſame Scriptures* which teach us, that there is *none other* God *but One*, do *incommunicably* reſtrain the *Divine Appellations*, *Attributes* and *Worſhip* to the *One* God by the ſtricteſt *Appropriation*: when the *ſame Scriptures*, thus aſſerting the *Divine Unity*, teach us alſo that to the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt* the *Divine Appellations*, *Attributes* and *Worſhip* are aſcribed without any *Limitation*, *Difference*, or *Inequality*; tho' we cannot comprehend the *Manner* we are obliged to believe the *Fact*, that *Theſe Three are One*, *ſubſiſting indiviſibly in One Eternal Eſſence*, *and mutualy indwelling in each other*: So far as we underſtand the Terms, we aſſent to the plain Propoſition, and believe on the *Evidence* and *Authority* of God, who propoſeth them to us. Admit the *Facts*, the *Unity* of *Eſſence* is a Concluſion to our Reaſon. We are able to explain the *Attributes* no more than

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the *Divine Subsistence*, and if the *Light* of *Nature* obligeth us to acknowledge the *Attributes*, and to acknowledge them to be Incomprehensible, the *same Light* upon the *same Principles*, will oblige us to believe all other *Articles* of *Revelation* also, and the Conclusion is not, that because the *Scriptures* assert the *Divine Unity*, therefore the *Father only is* GOD, but because the *Scriptures*, which assert the *Unity*, assert also the *same Essence*, *Attributes*, and *Worship* to the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, therefore the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* is *One* GOD with the *Father*.

If we have recourse to our *Natural Reason* alone for the Understanding and Explaining these *Mysterious* Truths, we impose a Task upon it, to which it is no ways equal; but if we set our *Reason* to examine into the Principles and Grounds of our *Believing*, this is a *proper* and *becoming* Employment for it, and we shall then be satisfied, that *Faith* is a Consequence, and in that regard a Duty also of *Natural Religion*, even when it is extended to *Articles* of *pure Revelation*, or that the *Principles* of *Natural Religion* oblige us to believe the *Articles* of *Revelation*: For as it is a first Principle in *Natural Religion* to *believe there is a* GOD, it is another Principle rising evidently from that, to *believe whatever He delivereth to us, and requireth us to believe.* So that, when we are satisfied, that the *Revelation* is from GOD, we are to receive it, as *such*, notwithstanding *It be*, like GOD *Himself*, above our *Comprehension.*

To conceive therefore and expreſs the *Nature* and *Attributes*, as well, as what we have been accuſtomed to call the more *Myſterious Revelations* of God, we muſt uſe the *Language* and Conceptions of Created *Beings* applied in a *Spiritual* ſenſe, ſuitable to that *One Incomprehenſible*, *Eternal*, *Inviſible Being*, *the Great and Glorious Lord* God, whom we adore. For thus the *Things* of God are *Spiritualy judged of and diſcerned* by the *Light of his Holy Spirit*, and by the *Truth of his Eternal Word*, who gave the *Revelation*: And conſidering that God Himſelf is one *great Myſtery*, perhaps nothing can be *revealed* of Him, but what is above our Comprehenſion, and its being *ſo*, if we purſue the Thought as far, as it will carry us, is is ſo far from being an *Objection*, that, where all other *requiſites* concur, it is one ſure *Argument* and *Criterion* of a *Divine Revelation*. Of this Nature are all the *Revelations* in the *Scripture*, whether diſcoverable in any degree by the *Light of Nature* or not: The *Articles* of *Natural Religion*, and *that*, which is ſtrictly called *Revealed*, are equaly *Incomprehenſible*; and the Endeavours, that have been uſed to *explain* them, have only made them the more *obſcure*.

To deliver the great *Articles of Faith* in *Scripture Language* only, is, as I have obſerved, the importunate Demand of thoſe, who *deviate* from the *Faith* contained in the *Scriptures*, and are Clamorous againſt all *Creeds*, as meer *Human* Inventions, when they are in Truth no more than the naked *Declaration* of the *Faith*, or a *Profeſſion* and *Remonſtrance* againſt all *Hereſy*

reſy and *Abnegation* of it. For my own part I do readily *cloſe* with the *Demand*, and am willing to put the *whole Controverſy* upon the *Foot* of *Scripture* only: If we take the *Propoſitions*, as expreſſed in the *Scriptures*, and *interpret* the *Scriptures* by the *ſame Rule*, and as we would any *other Book*, we ſhall be in no danger of *Misbelieving*, but when the plain *Doctrine* delivered in the Words of *Scripture* is *denied*, and the *Scripture Language* is *perverted* by *forced Conſtructions*, and *inconſiſtent Interpretations*, it is then neceſſary to ſhew the *Falſhood* of ſuch *Conſtructions*, and to defend the *Doctrine* againſt ſuch *Interpretations*.

Creeds were at firſt only ſhort Summarys of the *Chriſtian Doctrine*, that eſpecialy relating to the *Redemption* of the World, and the *Perſon* of our *Redeemer*: Every Point concerning Him was not enumerated and expreſſed, but only the moſt material and diſtinguiſhed: as to his *Perſon* declaring *Who He is*: as to our *Redemption* ſetting forth *What He did*, and *Suffered* for us. When, with Reference to the *Father*, the *Church* acknowledged *Him* to be *his only Son our Lord*, it was well underſtood *what* was intended, without entering into any Controverſy about his *Divinity*, nor, as we ſtill retain them, had the *Church* enlarged upon the Firſt more ſimple *Forms*, if the great *Truths* believed concerning our *Saviour* had not been *perverted*, and *denied*. In *Diſputations* we muſt follow the *Language* of our *Opponents*: If our *Adverſarys* deny the *Divinity* of our *Lord* we muſt aſſert it: if the *Adverſarys* invent Explications and Diſtinctions

ſtinctions we muſt obviate and anſwer them: The *Oppoſers* of the *Faith* firſt *innovated* in the *Language*: the *Maintainers* of it muſt of Neceſſity *reply* in *Terms Oppoſite*, and by *Propoſitions Contradictory* to *Theirs*.

Thus, with reſpect to the *Arians*, *Neſtorians*, and *Eutychians*, the *Church* vindicated the *Divinity* of our *Saviour*, *the Unity* of his *Perſon*, and the *Diſtinction* of his *Natures*, neceſſarily uſing ſuch Expreſſions, as were moſt oppoſite and concluſive againſt all *Contradiction* and *Evaſion*. And thus upon the Whole, God being declared in the *Scriptures* to be *One*, we expreſs this *Doctrine* by the Word *Unity*: The Father, Son and Holy Ghost being declared in the ſame *Scriptures* to be God, and being likewiſe *Perſonaly* diſtinguiſhed *Each* from *Other*, we do therefore expreſs this *Doctrine* by a *Trinity* of *Perſons* in the *Unity* of *Eſſence*: and becauſe the *Divine Nature* is *Indiviſible*, as we confeſs every *Perſon by Himſelf to be* God *and* Lord, we are brought to this inevitable *Concluſion*, that *there are Three Perſons and One* God.

This then is the *Faith* of *Chriſtians*, profeſſed, explained and vindicated, according to the cleareſt and moſt obvious ſenſe of the *Scriptures*, which deliver it.

To enumerate the Old *Unſcriptural* Terms brought in by *Heretics*, and compare them with thoſe *Few* made uſe of to explain and defend the *Catholic Faith*: and from the *Ancients* to paſs on to the *Refinements*, new *Inventions* and *Applications* of the *Moderns* would require a *Diſſertation* too *long*, and too *Curious* for this Place: I will

I will only obſerve that by *Unſcriptural* Terms are meant either *ſuch*, as are not to be found in *Scripture*, or *ſuch*, as are not only *not* to be found, but are alſo *contrary* to the *Scriptures*: Of the *firſt* ſort are *ſome*, which we are forced to uſe in this *Controverſy*: of the *ſecond* ſort are *thoſe* which our *Adverſarys* have invented, and they are *Unſcriptural* in *both* ſenſes: For all *Terms*, that propound a *Doctrine* contrary to the *Catholic* Faith muſt either of neceſſity be *Unſcriptural*, or if the *Doctrine* be dreſſed up in *Scripture Language*, the *Propoſitions* will be *Contradictory*.

The Word *Perſon* is, as hath been noted a *Scriptural* Term, tho' the Word *Perſons* be not found in the *Scriptures* in the *ſame* ſenſe we uſe it, when we ſay there are *three Perſons*; But the Word *Perſons* is neceſſarily underſtood, and by the Application of *Perſonality* to *Three*, *Three Perſons* are as evidently *implied*, as *One* only is *expreſſed*. Thus *Perſon* is applied to the *Father*, and therefore by neceſſity of *Relation* to the *Son* alſo. For we have no Conception of a *Father* without a *Son*, nor of a *Son*, but under the Notion of a *Perſon*, nor of any Peculiar and Appropriate Actions without a *Perſonal* Agent: And ſo the *Holy Ghoſt* is a *Perſon* alſo by his peculiar *Subſiſtence*, *Agency* and *Operations*: The The Word is uſed by our *Adverſarys* as frequently as by *our ſelves*, but by *us* it is uſed in a *Scriptural*, by *them* in an *Unſcriptural* ſenſe; By *us* the Term *One Perſon* is rightly applied to the *Father*: For *there is One Perſon of the Father*; and by Conſequence, as rightly to the *Son*, For *there is One Perſon*, that is *another*, and *not the ſame*

ſame of the *Son alſo*; and ſo to the *Holy Ghoſt*; But when it is applied to the *Father* alone, in Excluſion of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghoſt*, there it is miſapplied, and to a *Scriptural* Term there is affixed an *Unſcriptural* Meaning. Thus a *Plurality* of *Perſons* is denied, and this Application of the Term argueth *Unity* of *Perſon* inſtead of *Unity* of *Eſſence*. But the Conſideration of this *Term* will fall in again, when we come to ſpeak of the *Difficultys* attending the *Catholic Doctrine*, and the ſeveral *Heretical* Schemes.

There are other *Terms* uſed by our Adverſarys, which are entirely *Unſcriptural*, and convey unto us no manner of Conception concerning the Divine Being by any *Analogy* and Correſpondence in the World, ſuch as are *Unoriginated*, *Underived*, *Independent*, *Supremacy*, *Abſolutely ſupreme*, and many others, which are of no *ſignification* at all, when applied to the *Divine Eſſence* alone without any reſpect to the *Creature*: nor of any *Moment* in the *Cauſe*, if received and admitted under this plain *Diſtinction*, That they are *true* applied to God in the *Abſolute Perfection* of his *Eſſence* with reſpect to the whole *Creation*: *Not ſo*, applied to the *Father* with reſpect to the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*: We know their Meaning in the *firſt* part, but we know nothing of them in the *ſecond* part of the *Diſtinction*, unleſs the *Son* and the *Holy Ghoſt* be underſtood to be *Creatures*, at *ſome time derived from*, and at *all times* depending on the *Father*, as *Creatures* on their *Creator*, and in *this* ſenſe we deny them: With reſpect to the

the *Order* of our Thoughts, as when we ſay, that the *Father* is the *Firſt*, and with reſpect to that manner of Expreſſion, *The Father is of None*, and the *Son is of the Father alone, neither made nor Created*, and *the Holy Ghoſt is of the Father and the Son*, we admit the *Terms* as *conſiſtent* with the Eternal Generation of the *Son*, and the Eternal Proceſſion of the *Holy Ghoſt*. Otherwiſe, we hold that *None is afore or after other, None is Greater or Leſs than another, but the whole Three Perſons are Co-eternal together, and Co-equal.*

The *Metaphyſical* Nature of God: and the *Metaphyſical* Nature of the *Father* and the *Son*, is another *Unſcriptural* Term *uſed by them*, and unjuſtly *imputed* to *us*, which is brought to amuſe and confound the Reader, and hath no manner of ſignification, as applied in this *Controverſy* concerning the true and proper *Divinity* of the *Son* of God. Neither *Father* nor *Son*, as I have ſaid, have any *Metaphyſical* Nature at all, and to call *that* the *Eſſence*, which is only a *Metaphyſical* way of Conſidering it, is highly improper and Abſurd: if by *Metaphyſical* we mean any thing more than the *Real* Nature, we mean *nothing*, and he, that diſtinguiſheth between *Abſtract* and *Real* diſtinguiſheth between *ſomething* and *nothing*. We know not the *Eſſence* of the *Son*, but by the *Eſſence* of the *Father*, and ſo we know it is the *ſame*: and we know not in what *Metaphyſical* Manner, nor *how* in any Manner but that of *Eternal Generation* the *Father* is a *Father*, and the *Son* a *Son*. And after all when we have contemplated the

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Divine Eſſence in the moſt *abſtracted Metaphyſical* Manner, we may *adore* it indeed the more, as Devout *Contemplation* leadeth to *Adoration*, but we ſhall be ſo far from *Comprehending* it, that the more *Intenſely* we conſider it, the more *Incomprehenſible* we ſhall find it: As the more we endeavour to ſtretch our Thoughts to *Eternity*, the more we are loſt, and the deeper we are plunged in the *Abyſſes* of it.

For our ſelves in Conſequence of the *Divinity*, which we teach, we uſe the *Terms Uncreate*: of *one Subſtance*: of the *ſame Subſtance*, *Power* and *Eternity*, *Co-eternal* and *Co-equal*, as may be ſeen in our *Creeds* and *Articles*: All which neceſſarily ariſe as ſoon, as *Unity* of *Eſſence* is acknowledged. And theſe were *firſt uſed*, and are *ſtill continued* to maintain and defend the *Catholic Doctrine* againſt the Terms and Diſtinctions, which *Heretics*, the *Arians* eſpecialy, had invented to *undermine* and *overthrow* it. The whole Proceſs may be ſeen in that *Accurate Account of the Trinitarian Controverſy*, I mentioned at the Beginning. It is enough to juſtify our *uſe* of the *Terms*, that they are entirely correſpondent to the *Scripture Doctrine*, and were neceſſarily occaſioned by thoſe, who endeavoured to debaſe the *Son* unto the Order of *created* Beings, whether *Angelical* or *Human*. This the *Arians* and *Socinians* have attempted, and ſtill upon their ſeveral *Hypotheſes* continue to attempt.

The Difference then between us is whether the *Son* and the *Holy Ghoſt* be *One* God with the *Father*, or *Creatures* only *not Equal*, and *not Eter-*

Eternal with the *Father*, Let it be ſhewn, how we can depart from the *Creeds*, without departing from the *Doctrine*, and there may be ſome Pretence in deſiring theſe *Expreſſions*, I have mentioned, to be *laid aſide*. As long as we clearly aſſert the *Doctrine* that the *Son is* GOD, and the *Holy Ghoſt is* GOD truly and properly as the *Father* is, we are not ſo much concerned for this, or that *manner* of *enlarging* upon, and *expreſſing* it; but as long as the *Creeds* are a *guard* and *defence* againſt the *Contrary Doctrines* we cannot *depart* or *vary* from them without *departing* from the *true Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*. We can neither *leave* theſe *Points* at *large*, nor *qualify*, nor *palliate thoſe* Expreſſions, which yet are hardly ſtrong enough to prevent all attempts at leaſt of *Evaſion*, and *ſiniſter Conſtruction*: and I ſuppoſe, I may lay it down as an *Evident* and *Neceſſary Truth*, that in this *Controverſy* we cannot depart from the *Athanaſian*, without going into the *Arian*, or *Socinian Creed*.

It is charged upon the *Romiſh Miſſionarys*, that they *temper* their *Religion* to make it *Palatable* and agreable to their *Heathen* Converts, and the Task ſeemeth pretty Natural and Eaſy, for when they have won them to the Belief of a *Redeemer*, there is little more in the *External Worſhip*, beyond the *Worſhip* of GOD, but changing the *Objects*, and giving them the *Popiſh Kalender* inſtead of *their own*: There is no other Difference than between *Chriſtian* and *Heathen* Idolatry; but *we* can admit of *no Worſhip* that is not *taught* and *required* in the *Scriptures*.

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If ſome have imagined, they might *qualify* the *Chriſtian* Doctrine, and *ſuit* it to the *Genius* of thoſe, who are offended with *Myſterys* ſo much above their Comprehenſion, It is a *Bootleſs*, as well, as *Unwarrantable* Attempt, and can have no other Effect, than their own *Perverſion* from the *Faith*, and giving Strength and Countenance to *Infidelity*: But we are *tied* up to *ſtricter Rules*: It is not *lawful* for us to *uſe ſuch Libertys*: we muſt not *alter*, nor *add*, nor *diminiſh* from the *Word* of God, We muſt keep to the plain *Categorical* Aſſertions of the *Scripture*, and defend them againſt all *Contrary* and *Contradictory Propoſitions*; The *Chriſtian Faith* is not built upon *Hypotheſis*, but *Fact*, and is ever *fixed* and *inflexible*, like its *Divine Author*, *without* all *Variableneſs*, *or any ſhadow of turning*.

This therefore and *ſo ſtrict* is the Manner of *Teaching*. I proceed now in the *third* place,

3. To the *Difficultys* on *both ſides*: on the *ſide* of the *Catholic Doctrine*: and on the *ſide* of the moſt *prevailing*, particularly of the *Arian* and *Socinian Schemes*.

If the ſeveral *Schemes* propoſed did realy *ſolve* all *Difficultys*, and *laboured* under *none* themſelves *equal* at leaſt, if not *ſuperior* to thoſe, which they pretend to *ſolve*, they might challenge more Attention and Regard, and we ſhould *weigh* them, as *however* indeed we have *done*, and *ſtill* continue *to do*, with the utmoſt Care, before we do abſolutely reject them; But, as even then, *one* of their *Schemes* only could be *True*, we ſhould act moſt wiſely in *refuſing them*, unleſs they could evidently prove our *Doctrine*

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to be *falſe*, and then *agree which* of *Theirs* is the *Truth*: There are indeed *ſeveral* Ways of coming to the *ſame* Concluſion, and *ſeveral Hypotheſes* may end in the *ſame Point*, but where the *ſeveral Schemes* differ in their *Concluſions*, as *they* are *oppoſed* to *each other*, however they may drive at the *ſame Point*, as they are *oppoſed* to the *Church*, there *one* deſerveth no more Conſideration than *another*. It is indifferent to us whether the *Arian* or *Socinian* Scheme be *preferred* by *thoſe*, who oppoſe the *Divinity* of the *Son*, and when we have done *them*, and *our ſelves* ſo much Juſtice, as to compare them with the *Doctrine* of the *Goſpel*, we may ſit quietly down with this great and Comfortable Aſſurance, that if our *Doctrine* be not diſproved by *One Scheme*, it is *not* by *Another*: if not by the *Sabellian*, neither by the *Arian*, nor *Socinian*; but the more it is *examined* and *compared*, the more *Clear* and *Evident* its *Truth* doth ſtill *appear*.

Inſtead therefore of *pretending* to *ſolve*, we *own* and *embrace* the *Difficultys on our part* as *inſeparable* from that *Doctrine*, whoſe *Subject* is *Incomprehenſible*: The *Difficultys* of the *Chriſtian Faith* are *ſuch* as *neceſſarily* flow from the *Nature* and *Eſſence* of its *Almighty Author*. What? can Nothing *exiſt*, that is above our *Comprehenſion*? and can nothing be *true*, but what our *Reaſon* can every way *account* for? Will we deny that the Sun ſhineth, becauſe its Luſtre is too Bright for our Eyes, and we can look upon it only thro' a *clouded* Glaſs, or as its *Light* is *reflected*, or as it is *refracted* thro' ſome other

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Medium? otherwise we may look till we are *blind*, and *gaze* also on the *Mysterious* God-Head till be are *blind*, unless we are content to look upon those *Mysterys* as they are *revealed*, and here, while we are on this side Heaven, [a] *to see through a Glass darkly.* God [b] *dwelleth in the Light, which no Man can approach unto, whom no Man hath seen, or can see*, and shall we doubt his *Existence*, because we cannot see his *Face*? We may with equal reason deny the great *Mysterys* of our *Faith*, because they are above the *Strength* of our clearest *Facultys* to *discover*, and when *discovered*, to *comprehend.*

Vain therefore is every *Attempt* to *search*, when by *searching* we can never *unfold* the *complicated Mysterys* of the *Divine Nature*, nor *find out the Almighty unto Perfection.* Could our *Adversarys* shew that our *Assent* to the greatest *Mysterys* of the *Gospel* were resolvable into any thing but *Faith* and the *Veracity of an Incomprehensible* God, we might possibly be induced to think, that *Human Reason* is able to *comprehend*, *whatsoever* an *Infinite*, and *Eternal Mind* can *reveal*; But when their way of *solving Difficultys* is to *deny* the *Doctrine*, and when their own *Hypotheses* are loaded with *Difficultys* utterly *inconsistent* with the *first Principles* of *Religion*, we are then the more encouraged, even upon the *Principles* of *Reason* to *reject* their *Schemes*, and to *retain* our *own Doctrine*, especialy when we consider the *Difficultys on their Part* and *ours*: On *ours* the *Difficultys* arise from the *Incomprehen-*

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[a] 1 Cor. XIII. 12. [b] 1 Tim. VI. 16.

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ſible Nature and *Perfections* of GOD: on *Theirs* the *Difficultys* ariſe from plain *Contradiction* to the *Revelation*, and *their own Explications* of it.

We take all the Propoſitions of *Divine Revelation* in the plain and obvious ſignification of the *Words*, and underſtand them in the *ſame* way of *Analogy* in which we conceive and expreſs all the *Attributes* of GOD: We do not take them in a meer *Figurative* and *Alluſive* ſenſe ſo, as to deſtroy the *Reality*, nor in a *groſs Literal* ſenſe ſo, as to *make* GOD *altogether ſuch a one as our ſelves*, but we underſtand the *Reality* of the *Facts* in a Manner *ſuitable* to the *Divine Nature*, and *according* to His own *previous Revelation* of it, when He aſſerteth that *He is One*, that *He is Eternal*, that *He will not give his Honour to another*. When we find therefore the *Father* and the *Son* revealed under this *Eternal Relation* with all the *Divine Appellations*, *Attributes*, and *Honours aſcribed equaly to Both*, we take the *Fact*, as *it is*, and tho' we are moſt firmly ſatisfied, that the *Son* is *not* produced by *Creation*, yet we do *believe* that *He is the only begotten Son with the whole Eſſence of the Father communicated to Him*, as *one Man is the Son of another*.

In like manner the *Holy Ghoſt* being *diſtinguiſhed* from the *Father*, and the *Son*, and at the ſame time having the *Divine Attributes* and *Worſhip* aſcribed unto *Him* by the *ſame Scriptures*, which aſſure us, that *there is none other* GOD, *but One*, we acknowledge the *Holy Ghoſt* alſo to *be One* GOD *with the Father and the Son*. That *Three Perſons* ſhould ſubſiſt in *One Eternal Eſſence* un-

der theſe *Names* and *Relations*, we could know by *Revelation* only, and ſince they are ſpoken of under theſe *Perſonal* Diſtinctions, we have *ſo far uſed* the *Terms*, as from their ſeveral *Relation*, *Office*, and *Operations*, to denote the *ſeveral Perſons*, not ſo, as to conſtitute ſo many *Individuals*, affirming according to the *Revelation* an *Eternal* Diſtinction of *Perſons* in an *Eternal* Unity of *Eſſence*: and therefore in Virtue of this Sacred Unity The *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt equaly poſſeſſing* the *Divine Nature* and *Attributes* is the *only Living and True* God: the *Ever Bleſſed* and Univided *Trinity*, whom we adore. We uſe the Word *Trinity* not only with regard to the *Three Perſons*, but to ſhew the *Co-equality* alſo, evidently riſing from the Unity of *Eſſence*.

This is our *Doctrine*, even the *Truth*, *which is according to Godlineſs*, not only, as it promoteth a *Godly Life*, which is *too looſe* a *Limitation* of the Words, but eſpecialy as it regardeth the *true Worſhip* of God which is the Foundation of a *Godly Life*. The *Doctrine* is no other than the *great Myſtery of Godlineſs*: It includeth a *right Faith*, as the *true Principle* of *Holineſs*, and directeth us to the *Perſons* therein manifeſted, as the true *Object* of our *Adoration*.

On the other hand let us take any *Heretical Scheme* relating to the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, we ſhall find many expreſs Contradictions to *Scripture*, and many inſuperable Difficultys riſing not from the *Nature* of the *Subject*, but from their *own Explications* of it.

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The Word *Person* is, as we have seen, a *Scriptural* Word, and there expressed [a] by ὑπόστασις: and it is also an *Ecclesiastical* Term used and applied in a *different* Manner, both by the *Impugners* and *Defenders* of the *Catholic Faith*: and then it is called πρόσωπον. By ὑπόστασις is understood in *Scripture*, the *Personal Subsistence*, and in the *Ecclesiastical use* of the Word The *Personal Subsistence* of the *Father*, and of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost* in the same *Substance* or *Essence*: For tho' sometimes *it* is used to signify *Substance*, yet *it* is applied more peculiarly to the *Persons Subsisting*: as the *Father* is *one Person Subsisting* of *None*, the *Son* another *Person Subsisting*, *as being of the Father alone*, the *Holy Ghost* a *Third Person Subsisting*, as *being of the Father and the Son*, and therefore of *one undivided Essence* with the *Father*, and the *Son*, and so the Word referreth to the internal Constitution of the *Person*: The other πρόσωπον is used in several senses in the *Controversys*, that first occasioned the introducing it, and in the *Catholic* Writers it expresly signifys the *real external manifestation*, or *distinction* of a *Person*; as *Person* is understood in the Common Forms of Speech, and then, as taken from *Human Persons* it is an *Analogical* Term substituted to express that Correspondent Distinction in the *Divine Nature*, which ariseth from *Relation*, *Office*, and *Action* among Men; and accordingly in our Application of it we take it in an *Analogical* sense to distinguish the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy*

Ghoſt revealed to us in the *Scriptures* under thoſe *Perſonal* Diſtinctions in the *ſame* Sovereign and Eternal *Eſſence*, and ſo we uſe it in a Manner ſuitable to the *Divine Nature*, which admitteth a Diſtinction of *Relation* and *Office* in the Order of one, and Oeconomy of the other, but admitteth not of any Difference, or Inequality of *Eſſence*. Our *Adverſarys* uſing alſo the *ſame* Word, apply it either *Figuratively*, underſtanding by it only a Theatrical imaginary *Perſon*, as the *Sabellians*, or taking it in a ſtrict literal ſenſe of *Human Perſons*, that every *Perſon* is a diſtinct and ſeparate Individual *Being* of it ſelf, as do the *Arians* and *Socinians*, as if there were no Difference in *Perſon Human* and *Divine*; and there could be no diſtinguiſhing the *Perſons* without dividing the *Eſſence*.

According therefore to theſe different Notions the *Sabellians*, *Arians*, and *Socinians* underſtand the Term, and do alike hold, that in the *Divine Nature* there ſubſiſteth but One *Perſon* only, that of the *Father*; if the *Sabellians* do indeed admit the *Perſonality* of the *Father* unthat peculiar *Name* and *Relation*, It is certain they admit not of the *Perſonality* of the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*: they do not indeed deny the *Divinity*, but the *Subſiſtence* of thoſe *Perſons*; ſuppoſing *them diſtinct* they admit *them* to be *Divine*, but they take away the Diſtinction, and make *them* no more than *Names*, or the *ſame* God revealed under different *Characters*; and ſo they deſtroy at once the *Doctrine* of our *Lord's Incarnation*, and of our *Redemption*, or they make the *Father*, if not the *Father*, the

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God-Head it self to be *Incarnate, to have been born, to have suffered, and died.*

The *Arians* own the Distinction of *Persons*, but then they deny the Unity of *Essence*, and consequently the *Divinity* and *Eternity* of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*: At first indeed little was said concerning the *Holy Ghost*, but that *Article* fell in afterwards by unavoidable Consequence, and now according to the *Modern Scheme* the *Holy Ghost* is not only distinct from the *Father* and the *Son*, but different in *Nature*, and inferior to *Both*: The *Son* Himself is debased into the Rank of a *Creature*, and the *Holy Spirit* to a *Creature* still below Him: It is true, the *Arians* talk in very high Terms of his Production after an Incomprehensible Manner in some undetermined space of *Duration* before the Worlds, but they will not allow Him to be *Eternal*, or of the *same Substance with the Father*, and therefore if they will assert Him to be truly God, they must assert Him to be another God besides the *Father*: or if they explain themselves into a *Nominal, Delegated, Substituted* God, they do plainly make Him a *Creature*; for there is, as I have said, no middle Order between God and his *Creatures*: The *Creator* and *Creation* divide all *possible Being*: Whatever is not of the *same Substance, Power*, and *Eternity* with God, must absolutely be a *Creature.* It may also be further considered on the *Arian* Scheme whether they do not deny the *Divinity* of the *Father*, as well as the *Son*: That is, whether the *Father* be *Eternal*, if the *Son* be not *Eternal.* So far as *Eternity* is ascribed to God

under the Peculiar *Relation* and *Character* of the *Father*, to deny the *Eternity* of the *Son* weakeneth and undermineth the Proofs for the *Eternity* of the *Father* alſo. GOD, we know in his *Eſſence* is Eternal, and if in that *Eſſence* there be any *Relations*, thoſe *Relations* muſt be *Eternal* alſo: if the *Son* therefore be not *Eternal*, He is not properly a *Son*, nor is the *Father* properly a *Father*, and with reſpect to the *Son* not an *Eternal Father*.

The *Socinians* differ in nothing from the *Arians* with reference to the *Son*, but in denying his *Pre-exiſtence* before his *Incarnation*, and whereas the *Arians* make the *Holy Ghoſt* a *Creature*, the *Socinians* make Him no more than a *Name* to ſignify to us the *Divine Virtue* and *Intelligence* of the *Father*: Both of them agree in allowing the *Father* only to be *truly* GOD, and admitting but One *Perſon* in the Divine Eſſence; But becauſe the *Scriptures* do expreſly aſcribe the *Appellations*, and *Attributes* of the One GOD to the *Son*, and to the *Holy Ghoſt*, the *Arians* and *Socinians* ſuppoſe theſe *Appellations* to be given to the *Son* in a *delegated Commiſſion* of *Sovereignty* and *Dominion*: For the *Holy Ghoſt*, the *Arians* think it ſufficient at moſt to call Him a *Divine Perſon* in a looſe ſenſe of the Words, and the *Socinians* more conſiſtently without ſaying *He is a Creature* make *Him only a Name*: Both of them come to the ſame Concluſion, that the *Father only is* GOD, in Excluſion of the *Son* and the *Holy Spirit*; and this is a neceſſary Concluſion to thoſe, who deny the *Son* to be of the *ſame Eſſence* with the *Father*:

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who admit not any Distinction of the *Holy Ghost* from the *Father*, or who make Him a *Creature* inferior to the *Son*, as they make the *Son* a *Creature* inferior to the *Father*.

It lieth therefore upon such *Unitarians*, as receive the *Scriptures* to prove that the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* are *no Persons*, or properly that there is no *Son*, and no *Holy Ghost*: and that what is said of, and ascribed to *either* is meant only of the *Father*. The *Arians*, since they will not say that the *Son* is a *Creature*, and yet deny *Him* to be GOD of the *same Essence*, and *Power* with the *Father*, must prove, if they can that there are *Degrees* in the *Divinity*: That there is a *Being* who is *Inferior* to GOD and yet no *Creature*: and that the Divine *Attributes* and *Honours* can be ascribed unto the *Son* without the *Essence*. And particularly, that altho' in the Common Notion a *Son* is of the *same Nature* with *his Father*, yet that the *Son* of GOD cannot be of the *same Nature* with the *Father*: Or that the *Father* hath no *Son* begotten in Contradistinction to *Angels*, who are his Sons by Creation, and to *Men*, who are his Sons by Creation and Adoption. These are *some* of the *Difficultys* of the *Arian* Scheme, which are still more plain and inevitable in their Consequences. And the Difficultys attending the *Socinian* Plan are as great, as a direct Contradiction to *Scripture*, with respect to the *Pre-existence* of the *Son*, can make them, while they assert Him to be the *Son of Man, then first existing, when he was conceived and born of the Virgin.* And both *Arians* and *Socinians* have this Common Difficulty to

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answer, That God *hath made, what he forbiddeth us to make, other Gods besides Himself*, either *Spiritual Beings* as the *Arians* hold, or *meer Man* as the *Socinians*: and that when they have *made them other Gods*, either by Sensible Representations, as the *Idolaters*, or by their own Reasonings, as the *Arians*, &c. *they may fall down and Worship them.*

4. I proceed therefore in the *fourth* and *last* place to consider the Consequences necessarily following the *genuin Doctrine* of the *Church*, and the *several Schemes* of *those*, who have *departed* from *it.*

The *Immediate Consequences* of the *Sabellian* I shall not distinctly pursue, since upon the *Figurative* Construction they are equaly found in the *Arian* and *Socinian* Scheme, which, as the *Sabellian* doth, overturneth the whole *Order* and *Method* of our *Redemption*, and resolves the *Deity* into the *Person* of the *Father* only. All the Difference is, that the *Arians* make the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost Creatures*: The *Socinians* agree with the *Arians* in making the *Son* a *Creature*, and with the *Sabellians* in making the *Holy Ghost* only a *Name.* But the Consequences of the *Arian* and *Socinian* Scheme, as distinct from the *Sabellian* are,

1. First either *making more Gods* than *One*, or *paying Divine Worship to a Creature.* To support their Schemes the *Arians* must be able to prove the *Son* to be a *Creature* in his *Pre-existent Nature*, and the *Socinians*, that he hath no *other Nature* than the *Human*, and then *both* must prove, that *Divine Worship is to be paid to any other*,

other, than the One True God: that is either to a *Nominal* God or a *Creature* either of the *Arian* or *Socinian* kind. For how clear ſoever it appears to them, that the *Son is not One* God *of the ſame Eſſence with the Father*, and that in their way of Reaſoning *He is no more than a Creature of a Supereminent Nature* as ſay the *Arians*, of *Human* Nature only, as ſay the *Socinians*, and *Divinely Commiſſioned* as ſay *Both*, the *Divine Adoration* is ſo *evident*, that *they* cannot *refuſe* to *pay it*, and becauſe *they* are ſenſible, that ſtrictly ſpeaking, *Divine Worſhip is due to* God *alone*, they have been forced to the Expedient of a Mediate and Subordinate Worſhip for their Delegated and Subſtituted God. Let not the *Arians* therefore any longer prevaricate with the World by pretending, that in any proper ſenſe they believe the *Divinity*, which they ſo expreſly do *deny*: For their *Worſhip* is proportioned to their *Faith*, and the *Honour*, they allow, ſheweth plainly the *Divinity* they hold: In this the *Socinians*, however equaly inconſiſtent, are yet more Ingenuous, and both have this *Poſition* to maintain, that *Divine Worſhip is to be paid to any but* God *only*. The *Divinity* of *Chriſt* is ſurely more Eaſy to be proved from the *Scriptures* than that any *Worſhip* is commanded, or allowed to a *Creature*, and it is more Eaſy to prove, that *Creature Worſhip* is abſolutely forbidden, than that thoſe are *Creatures*, to whom *Divine Worſhip* is both *commanded* and *paid*. The Scriptures know no Diſtinction in the *Object*, or the *kind* of *Religious Worſhip*. The *Object is but One*, and that is God, and in the

the *Worſhip* it ſelf there are no Degrees of Supreme and Subordinate: They inſtance in *Mediatorial* Worſhip; but *Mediatorial* Worſhip is not a *diſtinct* Worſhip of the *Mediator* in a lower ſenſe, nor is it an Inferior or Subordinate Worſhip of the *Father*, nor does it paſs thro' *Chriſt* as a *Medium* to the *Father*: but all the *Worſhip* we pay to the *Father* is *direct* and *immediate*, even when we addreſs Him thro' the *Mediation* of *Jeſus Chriſt*: As much as *Daniel*'s Prayer was *immediately* directed to GOD, when he ſaid, [a] *Now therefore, O our* GOD, *hear the Prayer of thy ſervant, and his ſupplications, and cauſe thy Face to ſhine upon thy Sanctuary, that is deſolate, for the Lord's ſake*: *Who* the Lord is may deſerve their ſerious Conſideration, but this is no more a *mediate Worſhip*, than when he [b] ſubjoineth, *defer not for thy own ſake, O my* GOD. It is upon the Account of our own *Unworthineſs*, that we need, as a *Redeemer*, ſo a *Mediator*, but *Mediation* ſuppoſes no *Inferiority* of the *Mediator* to the *Perſon* He *mediateth* unto. For *Kings* are *Mediators* between *Kings*, and with regard to the Infinite Inequality between GOD and us, as there is [c] *One Mediator between* GOD *and Men the Man Chriſt Jeſus*, This *Mediator* is equal to the *Father* as touching his GOD-Head, and inferior only, as He is partaker of our *Nature*; The Aſſociating of which into his own Perſon maketh Him a fit *Mediator* between GOD and *Man*. He hath commanded us to [d] *pray* unto

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a Dan. IX. 17. *b* v. 19. *c* 1 Tim. II. 5. *d* John XVI. 23, 24.

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the *Father* in his *Name*, and [a] *He is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto* God *by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make Intercession for us*, and if this be *Mediatorial* Worship, it differeth nothing from the Supreme and Sovereign *Worship* paid unto the *Father*, except that the *Worship* is more exalted and Divine, which is offered in the *Name* of *Christ*, than *that*, which is only offered in our *own*. *Mediatorial* Worship is not praying to the *Mediator* to pray for us unto the *Father*, but it is praying to the *Father* in the Name of the *Mediator*, and pleading the *All-sufficiency* of his Infinite *Merits* and *Mediation* on our Behalf: And this *Form* of *Prayer* implieth not any *Inferiority* in *Himself*, but only in *us*: When we pray unto *Christ* and say, *Lord have Mercy upon us*, we pray unto *Him* directly, and our *Worship* terminateth in *Him*; and when in our *Prayers* we call *Him* our *Redeemer*, our *Mediator* and *Advocate*, we do *recognize* these *Titles* in Him, and implore his *Intercession*, as well as plead his *Merits* under these Endearing Names of *Mediator* and *Redeemer*. These Forms are addressed directly and immediately unto God and *Christ*, but not directly and immediately from our selves, or in our own Names, or for our own Merits: For [b] *we do not present our supplications before* God *for our own Righteousness, but for his great Mercys*. And we hope to be *heard*, as we hope to be *forgiven*, not for our own Merits, but for the Merits of *Christ* our *Redeemer*. The *Worship* we pay to

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a Hebr. VII. 25. b Dan. IX. 18.

Christ

Chriſt is not the ſame Perſonal *Worſhip* we pay to the *Father*, but it is the ſame Supreme *Worſhip*, nor is it paid to *Chriſt* meerly as our *Mediator*, but as our *Mediator* is GOD as well as *Man*, and not with regard to his *Office* only, but his *Nature* alſo; as we adore Him Now in his *Human Nature* united to the *Divine*, not becauſe of the *Human Nature*, but becauſe of the *Divine*: And *Divine Worſhip* is now commanded to be paid Him, which is Eternaly due unto Him, that the *Aſſumption* of the *Human Nature* might be no Diminution of the Honour due unto the *Divine*, and that no Doubt might ariſe concerning it, nor Miſtake about it, for as with reference to his *Eternal Generation* we read, [a] *Unto which of the Angels ſaid He at any Time, Thou art my Son this day have I begotten Thee?* with reference to his *Temporal* we read, [b] *When He bringeth in the firſt begotten into the World, He ſaith, And let all the Angels of* GOD *Worſhip Him.* And thus [c] the *Father* hath committed all *Judgment unto the Son, That all Men ſhould Honour the Son, even as they Honour the Father.* And for his Humiliation, Sufferings and Death, [d] GOD *hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name, which is above every Name, That at the Name of Jeſus every Knee ſhould bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth, And that every Tongue ſhould confeſs, that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the Glory of* GOD *the Father.* Such is the Exaltation of his *Hu-*

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a Hebr. I. 5. *b* v. 6. *c* John V. 22, 23. *d* Philip. II. 9, 10, 11.

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man Nature, and as St *Peter* infallibly assureth the *Jews*, [a] GOD *hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have Crucified both Lord and Christ.* And thus GOD hath [b] glorified his Son *Jesus*, according to his Prayer: [c] *I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finished the Work, which thou gavest me to do: And now, O Father, glorifie thou me with thine own self, with the Glory, which I had with Thee before the World was.* This relates all to the *Human Nature* alone, but to the *Human* as *then* assumed in his Person into the *Divine*: That the *Human Nature* might be no *Impeachment* of his *Honour*, but that *together* with the *Worship* due unto Him for his *Essential Perfections*, we should *Worship* Him, as our [d] *Redeemer* also, *equaly* with the *Father* the *Object* of our *Adoration*: as we are equaly [e] *Baptized*, and equaly [f] *Blessed* in his *Name*, and as *Honour* is *equaly ascribed* unto [g] *Him, that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.*

Upon the whole we find not in the Scriptures that the *Son of* GOD is a *Creature*; we find plainly that He is the *Creator*: we find not that *Worship* is to be paid to any but GOD alone: so far from being *commanded*, that it is *absolutely forbidden* to any else: *Divine Worship* inferreth the *Divine Essence*, and as it is *impossible* to transfer the *Divine Essence*, it is *unlawful* to transfer the *Divine Worship* to a *Creature*: We worship first the *Father* as our *Creator*, and *Christ* as our *Redeemer* in the *Personal Oeconomy* and Consideration of the

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a Acts II. 36. *b* III. 13. *c* John XVII. 4, 5. *d* Rev. V. 9, 12. *e* Mat. XXVIII. 19. *f* 1 Cor. XIII. 14. *g* Rev. V. 13.

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Divine Being, but *Chriſt* is not therefore *Worſhipped with lower* or any *mediate Worſhip* as our *Redeemer*: To uſe the Words of our Old Tranſlation, [a] *Prayer is made ever unto Him, and daily ſhall He be praiſed*: The *Worſhip directed* unto Him, *terminateth* in *Him*, and paſſeth not to the *Father*, any more, than the *Worſhip* of the *Father* paſſeth unto the *Son*, but the *Son* is *glorified* in the *Father*, and the *Father* in the *Son*, according to his *Prayer*, [b] *glorifie thy Son, that thy Son may alſo glorifie Thee*: The *Glory* is *mutual*, The *Father* is glorified under his *Perſonal* Character, and the *Son* under *his*, but the *Glory* is *equal*, The *Majeſty Co-eternal*: The *Son* is not therefore *inferior* to the *Father*, any more than the *Father* is to the *Son*, or the *Holy Spirit* to *either*, when our *Lord* ſaith of Him, [c] *He ſhall glorifie Me*, but *He with the Father* and the *Son together is worſhipped and glorified*. And it is *remarkable* that the *Son* in reſpect to his *Human Nature prayeth* unto the *Father*, but the *Holy Spirit*, who hath not taken our *Nature* upon Him, is no where ſaid to pray unto the *Father*: There is a *Perſonal* Diſtinction only between *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, and there is no other Diſtinction in the *Worſhip*; as one is not *greater* or *leſs* than another, the *Worſhip* is *equal*, and admits of no Degrees of *Supreme*, or *Inferior*, *Mediate*, or *Immediate*, and it is no *Impropriety*, but the *ſtricteſt Truth* to ſay, that we pray *immediately* to the *Father*, when we pray in the *Name* of the *Son*, and beg to be accepted for

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a Pfal. LXXII. 15. *b* John XVII. 1. *c* XVI. 14.

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his *Merits*, and thro' his *Mediation*. By calling Him our *Mediator* we acknowledge Him to be the *Lord*; and his *Mediation*, as it regards our *particular Requeſts*, is a peculiar Demonſtration of his *Omniſcience*.

This Point hath been unanſwerably *ſettled* and *maintained* by the moſt Learned *Defences of ſome Queries*, and I will only obſerve that it is impoſſible to Maintain the *Lawfulneſs* of *Inferior ſubordinate Worſhip* addreſſed to *any Creature* upon *any Account*: or offered to *any* other than the *Supreme Object* of Worſhip, but by ſuch *Arguments* as will juſtifie both *Pagan* and *Popiſh Idolatry*: and perhaps it is from a Conviction, that the ſame Concluſion reacheth to the *Arian* and *Socinian* which affecteth the *Popiſh* and *Pagan Practice*, that we have been preſented with ſome formal *Vindications* of the *Heathen* from *Idolatry* by the ſame *Arguments*, which the *Arians*, *Socinians* and *Papiſts* uſe, of Subordinate and Mediate Worſhip paſſing thro' the Inferior to the Supreme Object, and terminating there. The *Papiſts* however are right in the Worſhip of the *Son*, but the *Arians* and *Socinians* believing Him a *Creature* can no more vindicate their Worſhip of the *Son*, than the *Papiſts* can *Theirs* of the *Mother*. The Vindication both of *Heathen* and *Chriſtian Idolatry* is juſt the ſame, and both are juſtified alike by Mediate and Subordinate Worſhip ultimately referred to, and terminating in God Himſelf. Whatever Difference there may be in the *Object* of *Chriſtian* and *Heathen Idolatry*, ſtill as the *Worſhip* in *both* is *Creature-Worſhip*, it is by the Scriptures

Scriptures equaly forbidden: There may be aggravations of *Idolatry*, as of other Sins: but whether we *Worship* an *Angel* of *Light* or an *Angel* of *Darkness*, it is equaly *Idolatry*: And before we have any *more Vindications* of the *Heathen* from the Charge of *Idolatry*, let it be well weighed what the *Apostle* saith: [a] *The Things, which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to Devils and not to* God. And *all*, that call themselves *Christians*, should consider the meaning of those Words of [b] *doing service to them, which by Nature are no Gods.*

2. Another *Consequence* is, that the *Arians* are either *Sabellians*, *Polytheists*, or *Unitarians*. They charge us, that upon our *Catholic* Principles we must be either *Sabellians*, or *Tritheists*: And truly if we expounded the Doctrine of the *Trinity* in a meer *Figurative* Way, making the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* only *different Manifestations* of the *same Person*, this would be *Sabellianism*, or if we expounded it in a *gross Literal* Way, so as to make the *Three Persons three separate Beings* as do the *Arians*, then, if at the same time we held the proper *Divinity* of the *Persons*, this would be *Tritheism*: but when we hold the proper *Divinity* of the *Persons* against the *Arians*, and the Distinction against the *Sabellians*, and against *both* the Divinity and Distinction in the most absolute and perfect *Unity* of *Essence*, we are clear both of *Sabellianism*, and *Tritheism*, and the Charge lieth realy upon the *Arians*, who are *Unitarians*, upon *two* sup-

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a 1 Cor. X. 20. *b* Gal. IV. 8.

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positions, and *Polytheists* upon a *third*. As far, as they take the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* into the Scheme of Mans Redemption, and yet allow no *Person* in the God-Head but the *Father*, if they believe the *Divinity* of the *Son* and *Holy Ghost*, they are *Sabellians*, that is *Unitarians* upon one Supposition: If they hold the Distinction of the *Persons*, as I think they clearly do, and deny the Divinity of the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost*, they are *Unitarians* upon another Supposition; But if they hold the *Son* to be *truly* God, they are *Polytheists* upon a *Third*, while they deny Him to be of the *same* Substance with the *Father*. For *He* is, if God, either the *same* God with the *Father*, or *another* God, besides the *Father*. The same is to be said so far, as they pretend to hold any Divinity of the *Holy Ghost*, but if they deny the Divinity of the *Son* and of the *Holy Ghost*, they are no other than *Unitarians*, that believe the Scriptures, and yet acknowledge not the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* to be One God with the *Father*: The *Unitarians*, who deny *revealed Religion*, are in this *consistent*, that they acknowledge One God without considering any *Relation* in Him as a *Father*, further, than as the *Father* and *Creator* of the World; But the *Unitarians* who receive the Scriptures, and acknowledge Him under the *Relation* of a *Father* to a *Son* pre-existent to the *Creation* of the World, are *inconsistent* in denying the Divinity of the *Son*, and admitting that of the *Father* only: The *Father* with regard to his *Personal Relation* is no *Father*, unless the *Son* be *Eternaly* his *Son*: The *Relation* must

needs be as *Eternal* as the *Eſſence*, otherwiſe the *Son* is not properly a *Son*, any more, than *Angels* and *Men* are the *Sons* of GOD: They profeſs to believe in One GOD only; So do *we alſo* in the *ſtricteſt* and *higheſt* Notion of the Divine *Unity*: This is the *Language* of *Nature*, and the *Unity* of the GOD-Head is the *Grand Univerſal* Principle: no leſs the Doctrine of *Revelation* than of *Reaſon*; and ſo far *Chriſtians* are all agreed in this great *Article* of *Natural* and *Revealed Religion*; But then, that in the Divine *Nature* ſhould ſubſiſt *more Perſons* than *One*: that therein ſhould be founded the *Eternal Relations* of *Father* and *Son* together with the *Holy Ghoſt*: One GOD in *Eſſence* and *Attributes*, but diſtinguiſhed by *Relation*, *Operation*, and *Office*, this we could not have known, unleſs it had been *Revealed*: The Unity of *Eſſence*, and Diſtinction of *Perſons* are acknowledged by *Chriſtians*, and denyed by *Arians*, *Socinians* and *Unitarians*, whether the *Unitarians* be thoſe, who *receive* or *reject* a *Revelation*. To thoſe, who *deny Revealed Religion* we have nothing to ſay, but to recommend to their Conſideration the ſeveral *Arguments* for it, and the ſpecial *Evidences* of it: To *thoſe*, who admit a *Revelation*, and the Scriptures to contain that *Revelation*, we have it only to recommend to their Thoughts, whether they admit or reject the *Doctrines revealed*, and are not as ſtrict *Unitarians* in oppoſition to the *Chriſtian* Faith, as *thoſe*, who reject all *Revelation*? This may furniſh a proper Subject of Debate between the *Arians* and *Socinians*: For neither will admit

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the others Doctrine to be *True*: and yet the *Concluſion* and *Conſequences* from *Both* are the *ſame*: So far as they admit the *Revelation*, and deny the Divine Nature of the *Perſons* revealed, they muſt *Both* end in the *Unitarian* Scheme, or if they will uſe *Catholic* Language without a *Catholic* Meaning, they muſt run into the other Conſequences of *Sabellianiſm* or *Polytheiſm* here charged upon them. We find in the Scriptures, that GOD is *One* in the moſt Abſolute and Abſtract Notion of *Unity*: But we find alſo an admirable *Order* and *Oeconomy* revealed in the Divine *Nature* ſo far, as relates to the *Counſel* and *Work* of the *Creation* and *Redemption* of *Man*: From whence we learn, that, tho' GOD *is One*, He is not a *ſolitary Being*: that in the GOD-Head the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt* are *revealed equaly poſſeſſed of the ſame Nature* and *Attributes*, and at the ſame Time *Perſonaly diſtinguiſhed* by *Relation*, *Acts*, and *Office*. The Divine *Nature* and *Attributes* are ever the *ſame*, and however the *Perſons* are *diſtinguiſhed*, the *Eſſence* is and can be but *One*. Whatever the *Arians*, and *Socinians*, or any other *Schemiſts* may do, we dare not acknowledge *more* GOD's *than One*, nor dare we *pay Divine Adoration to a Creature*.

3. I ſhall mention but One *Conſequence* more, which relateth more immediately to our *Eternal* Salvation, and it is no leſs than this, that the *Arian* and *Socinian* Schemes do *vacate* our *Redemption* by *Chriſt Jeſus* our *Lord*, ſo far as our *Redemption* dependeth upon the *Perſon* and *Quality* of our *Redeemer*. For if our *Redemption*

ſtandeth upon the *Divine Relation* of our *Redeemer*, and we are to conſider not only *what* was *done*, but eſpecialy by *whom*, then to make Him *Other* or *Leſs*, than He *is*, vacates the *Redemption*, and thoſe, who *believe not*, as we do *in the Name of the Son of* God, believe not in the *ſame Redeemer*, nor can they upon their own Schemes be made Partakers of his *Redemption*: They cannot indeed *actualy* vacate this *Redemption*, and their Opinions can only affect themſelves, but cannot alter the *Facts*, nor defeat the *Counſel* of God. Only we ſay, as is uſual in this way of Argument, that ſuch *Poſitions* are *inconſiſtent* with ſuch *Doctrines*, and the *admitting* them *maketh void* thoſe *Points*, which the Scriptures have aſſerted; as by cancelling the *Obligation* the *Antinomians* may be ſaid to *make void the Law*, and we may apply what St *Paul* ſaith of the *Reſurrection* of *Chriſt* to the *Doctrine* of our *Redemption*. If *Chriſt hath not redeemed us* [a] *our Faith is vain, we are yet in our ſins.* Our *Redemption* depends upon a *right Faith* concerning our *Redeemer*, and therefore cannot ſtand upon the *Arian* or *Socinian* Scheme. For *Chriſt* is our *Redeemer* as He is that *very Perſon* ſet forth in the Scriptures, and if He were not *that Perſon*, He could not have been our *Redeemer*, and tho' the *Arians* do in *Terms* acknowledge the *Redemption*, and by imitating *Catholic* Language ſeem to ſave Appearances, yet if they believe not in the *ſame Saviour*, whom we believe in, that is if *they* believe in

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[a] 1 Cor. XV. 17.

a *Crea-*

a *Creature*, and we *believe in the Name of the Son of* God, they *make void*, the *Redemption* by *Christ Jesus our Lord*.

The *Socinians* indeed do with *denying* the *Divinity* of our *Saviour* very Consistently *deny* his *Satisfaction* also, and till it can be proved, that a *Creature* can *redeem* us, we have no Ground to believe, that we are *redeemed* by a *Creature*, and therefore tho' the *Socinians* to avoid a flat denyal may talk of *Redemption* in some general Terms, and tho' the *Arians* may realy believe it, yet to *Both* of them we answer, that the *Excellency* of the *Creature* addeth *nothing* in this Case to the *Value* of the Sacrifice made by Him, for the *Distance* must still be *infinite* between the *Creator* and the *Creature*, and no superadded *Dignity* or *Character* can inhance the *Value* with God, who is supposed to add them, since with the greatest *Dignity* he is but a *Creature* still. The highest *Elevation* maketh no Change in his Nature, but only setteth him forth with so many *Names* and *Titles*, which carry no *Intrinsic Value* with that God, who gave them: When an Earthly *Prince* hath raised a *Favourite* with accumulated Honours to the highest Dignitys in his Kingdom, he may indeed be more Honourable and Glaring in the Eyes of his *Fellow Subjects*, but to his *King* He is equaly a *Subject* still; and so the most Excellent *Angels*, tho' greatly *superior* to us in Dignity, are no more, than our *Fellow servants*, and *Creatures* as much, as we.

Let the *Arians* and *Socinians* therefore turn and wind their Schemes ten thousand ways, and

try them upon a thousand Suppositions differing from the *Catholic* Doctrine they can never bring them to the *Doctrine* of a true and proper *Redemption* by a *Price* and *satisfaction* paid. The *Socinians*, as hath been said, deny it, and turn the whole into a *Figurative* and *Allegorical* Interpretation: So likewise do those *Sects* among us, who *deny* the *Reality* of our *Saviour's Incarnation*, and *Sufferings*, whatsoever they believe of his *Divinity*; and the *Arians*, who make Him a *Creature*, or any ways less than the *Father* with regard to his *Essence*, do inevitably fall into the *same Consequences*, and tho' they acknowledge the *Reality* of his *Sufferings*, they do infinitely *lessen* the *Value* of his *Sacrifice*.

Such then are the *Consequences* of the *Arian* and *Socinian* Schemes, but the *Doctrine* of the *Church* in these Points is *Uniform* and *Consistent* according to the whole *Revelation* of God from the *Creation* to the *Redemption* of the World: So that we are *clear* of the *Consequences* charged upon the *Arians* and *Socinians* with regard both to our *Faith* and *Worship*, together with *those* Doctrines, which so immediately concern our Salvation: the *satisfaction* of *Christ*, and the *Redemption* of *Man*.

With respect to the *Former* we *believe* in, and do consequently *Worship* and *Adore One Living* and *True* God as *revealed*, and declared to us under the *Name*, *Personality*, and *Distinction* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost eternaly subsisting in One Undivided Essence*. We Worship no *inferior* Being, and altho' we can distinguish an

Order

Order of *Relation*, we hold nevertheleſs the *Eternity* and *Co-equality* of the *Perſons*.

And for the *Work* of our *Redemption*, we are taught, that it proceedeth from the *free Grace* and *Mercy* of God to Sinners, which yet He would not extend without an *Atonement* to his *Juſtice*, and a *Renovation* of their *Nature*. This *Atonement* is the *Sacrifice* and the *Death* of *Chriſt*, which was no ſooner *determined* by the *Counſel* and *Will* of God, but the *way* to *Salvation* was ſet open upon *ſuch Terms* and *Conditions*, as it pleaſed God in his *ſeveral Diſpenſations ſucceſſively* to require. With regard to us eſpecialy, to whom the *whole Counſel of* God *is declared*; we are aſſured, that [a] *Chriſt Jeſus came into the World to ſave ſinners*: *that* He [b] *hath redeemed us unto* God *by his Blood*: that God is pleaſed to accept us in his [c] *Beloved Son*: upon his *Mediation* and *Interceſſion* to *hear* us, to *pardon* our *ſins*, and to grant us ſuch *Aſſiſtance* and *ſupplies* of *Grace*, as are *needful* for us to *renew* and *ſanctifie* our *Nature*, and to enable us from a true *Principle* of *Faith* to perform a *true Evangelical* Obedience.

Thus this *Sacrifice* and *Atonement* once made in the *Fulneſs* of *Time* being the *Purpoſe* and *Counſel* of God from the *Foundation of the World*, extendeth *Backwards* as high as *Adam*; and all the faithful Servants of God receive the Benefit of it from the *Beginning* to the *End* of the World: *Thoſe before* the *Goſpel*, upon ſuch a *Faith* as *embraced* the *Doctrines then revealed*, and according to ſuch *Light*, as was *then* afforded

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a 1 Tim. I. 15. *b* Rev. V. 9. *c* Eph. I. 6.

them:

them: *Thoſe ſince* the *Goſpel* by *ſuch* a *Faith*, as is *thereby* required according to the *Revelation* of the *whole Counſel* of GOD.

Thus as the Scriptures teach us, the whole Bleſſed *Trinity* worketh together for the accompliſhment of our *Redemption*: It is entirely the Work of GOD: No *Creature* can claim any Part or Merit in Effecting it: Herein we behold the full Diſplay of the Divine *Order* and *Oeconomy*: By this merciful *Revelation* is the *One* GOD of us *Chriſtians* preſented in the Holy Scriptures: In the Accompliſhment of this great Work we ſee the ſeveral *Parts* how *aſſigned* and how *performed*, falling in with, and ſupporting each other by an intimate and neceſſary Connection, a reciprocal Virtue, and reference in every *Operation* throughout the *Whole*: The *Myſterious* part we pretend not to account for: *What* is done, and by *Whom* we believe.

I ſhall conclude with an *Exhortation* drawn from the *Conſequences* of the *Doctrine* which we teach, that we ever ſtand *firm* and *immoveable* in this *Faith*: That we [a] *continue ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles Doctrine and Fellowſhip, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayer.* That we [b] *forſake not our own Mercys* and *Chriſt Jeſus our Lord* [c] *In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveneſs of Sins according to the Riches of his Grace.*

Upon this ſure Foundation we ſtand: a *Revelation*, which fully anſwereth all the Doubts of a Guilty Mind, which quieteth the troubled

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a Acts II. 42. *b* Jonah II. 8. *c* Epheſ. I. 7.

Breaſt,

Breaſt, and is an *Anchor* of the Soul *both ſure and ſtedfaſt*, which will never break away. Here we place our *Faith*, our full *Truſt* and *Affiance*: Not in *Men* nor in *Angels*, nor in any *created Being*, but in GOD *alone*: Our *Redemption* is compleated by the Effectual *Operation* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt* ever ſubſiſting in the ſame *Conſubſtantial* and Undivided Eſſence: Whatever Doubts might ariſe from any *ſatisfaction*, which the moſt glorious *Creature* could make, are clearly removed by the *Greatneſs* and *Dignity* of the *Son* of GOD: and how great ſoever the Corruption of our Nature is, tho' we cannot be *ſanctified* by the Influence of any *created* Spirit, we are aſſured that the *Spirit* of GOD, in [a] *whoſe Image* we were firſt *created*, [b] *when the Lord* GOD *formed Man of the Duſt of the Ground, and breathed into his Noſtrils the Breath of Life*, THIS mighty *Principle* ſo *Operative* at the *Creation*, is able to [c] *renew a right ſpirit within us*: to *cleanſe* our *Hearts*, and *purifie* our *Minds*, to reſtore us to our *Original* Perfection, and improve it by *Evangelical Graces* unto our perfect *Conſummation*, that ſo [d] *our whole Spirit and Soul and Body may be preſerved blameleſs unto the Coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

And then to what higher Degrees of Glory and Perfection we may be advanced, ſtill improving and growing more and more perfect for ever, we cannot ſay. Of this however we are aſſured, that [e] *Now we are the Sons of* GOD,

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a Gen. I. 27. *b* II. 7. *c* Pſal. LI. 10. *d* 1 Theſſ. V. 23. *e* 1 John III. 2.

and

and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is, and be transformed, as it were, into his Divine Likeness by beholding Him; when in the Language of St *Paul*, [a] *We all with open Face beholding as in a glass, the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord*; that is, when with an *Unveiled* Countenance looking, as thro' a *Perspective*, we shall, by continual viewing that *Mirrour* of *Glory*, be changed continualy into a nearer *Resemblance* from one *Degree* of *Glory* to *Another*. [b] *Here, or as yet, we see through a Glass darkly, but then Face to Face*: Here the *Mirrour* we look *upon* reflects only a *Symbolical* or *Enigmatical* Resemblance, and the *Divine Mysterys* are *veiled* from our Eyes, and *presented* to us in *Analogical* Conceptions and *borrowed* Forms: There the *glass* we look *thro'* will discover the very *Substance*, and we shall see Face to Face: Now [c] *we do but know in part*, and therefore can only *propheſie in* part, but [d] *then we shall know even as also we are known*: Then only shall we know, when we shall see Him as He is: All Glory, all Blessedness, and Love! For *Faith* shall be swallowed up in *Vision*, and *Hope* shall end in the Everlasting *Fruition* of this Glorious God-Head, but *Love* shall endure for ever, ever *streaming* forth from God, and ever *increasing* and *returning* in in the most pure Devotion to *Him*: and ever *Circumfused* in the most Universal *Charity* and

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a 2 Cor. III. 18. *b* 1 Cor. XIII. 12. *c* v. 9. *d* v. 12.

Bene-

Benevolence to all *Saints* and *Angels* in the most perfect *Communion*, in the *Worship* and *Praises* of our God for ever.

And therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the Company of Heaven, we laud and magnifie God's *glorious Name, evermore praising Him, and saying,* Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts: *Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory: Glory be to Thee, O Lord most High.* Amen.

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FINIS.